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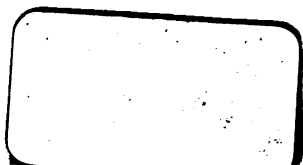
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of Hooker's life

RICHARD HOOKER.

"The death of the saints of God is precious in His sight; and shall it seem unto us superfluous, at such times as these are, to hear in what manner they have ended their lives?"

HOOVER.

LAST HOURS OF CHRISTIANS;

OR,

An Account of the Deaths

OF

SOME EMINENT MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND;

FROM THE PERIOD OF THE REFORMATION
TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT CENTURY.

W

BY THE

REV. HENRY CLISSOLD, M.A.

“Nothing can awaken the attention, nothing can affect the heart of man more strongly than the behaviour of eminent Christians in their last moments, in that only scene of life, wherein we are all sure, sooner or later, to resemble them.”—MALLET'S LIFE OF LORD BACON.



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THE reader will observe that a large portion of this work consists of passages from authors, contemporary with those whose last hours are here recorded. The fidelity of the narratives has thus been preserved: and the frequent variations occurring in the language and style will hence be accounted for.

This little book is earnestly recommended to the perusal of those who are in health, that it may prove of greater use and benefit to them in the time of sickness. "Remember," says Robert Nelson, "to be that in health, which you will wish to have been when you come to die."

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Preface	ix
John Wicklif, D.D.	1
Rev. William Tyndale	4
Lady Jane Grey	6
John Redmayne, D.D.	9
King Edward VI.	11
Bishop Hooper	13
Bishops Latimer and Ridley	16
Rev. John Philpot	19
Archbishop Cranmer	20
Roger Ascham	22
Bishop Jewell	24
Archbishop Parker	27
Rev. Bernard Gilpin	29
Sir Philip Sidney	31
William Cecil, Lord Burghley	33
Rev. Richard Hooker	36
John Reynolds, D.D.	41
Prince Henry	44
Robert Abbot, Bishop of Salisbury	49
Sir Walter Raleigh	51
Theophilus Aylmer, D.D.	52
Bishop Andrews	55

	PAGE
John Donne, D.D.	57
Rev. George Herbert	63
Rev. Nicholas Ferrar	72
Mrs. Jane Ratcliffe	74
Sir Henry Wotton	80
Nicholas Ferrar, jun.	83
Bishop Bedell	86
Francis Quarles	92
King Charles the First	95
Frances, Countess of Carbery	99
James, Earl of Derby	101
William Gouge, D.D.	103
John Selden	106
Bishop Hall	108
Archbishop Usher	113
Henry Hammond, D.D.	117
Bishop Sanderson	126
Peter Heylyn, D.D.	129
Bishop Jeremy Taylor	131
Sir Matthew Hale	133
Rev. Benjamin Whichcote	136
Lord William Russell	139
Archbishop Leighton	141
Bishop Thomas	143
Archbishop Sancroft	145
Queen Mary II.	149
Archbishop Tillotson	155
Rev. John Kettlewell	161
Rev. Thomas Cole	167
The Right Hon. the Lady Cutts	169
Rev. William Burkitt	174
John Locke	176
Rev. John Ray	179
Bishop Bull	181
Bishop Ken	191

CONTENTS.

vii

	PAGE
Archbishop Sharp	193
Bishop Burnet	196
Right Hon. Joseph Addison	198
Rev. Charles Leslie	200
Sir Isaac Newton	202
Bishop Wilson	204
Rev. James Hervey	207
Right Hon. Lord Lyttelton	213
Rev. Mr. Longueville	215
Bishop Lowth	217
Sir William Jones	219
Samuel Johnson, LL.D.	221
Concluding remarks	226

PREFACE.

It has been very forcibly observed by the Author of "Holy Living and Dying," that "the consideration of Death is of great usefulness and great necessity to many purposes of Wisdom and the Spirit. All the successions of time, all the changes in nature, all the varieties in light and darkness, the thousand thousands of accidents in the world, and every contingency to every man, and to every creature, doth preach our funeral sermon, and calls us to look and see how the old sexton, Time, throws up the earth, and digs a grave, where we must lay our sins or our sorrows, and sow our bodies, till they arise again in a fair or in an intolerable eternity¹."

Death is looked upon by many persons as the greatest of evils ; and, indeed, it is so, to those of the rich who, like the foolish man in the Gospel,

¹ Bishop Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living and Dying.

think of nothing but how to increase their worldly store, regardless of the shortness and uncertainty of life, and unprepared for that solemn account which they must one day give at the judgment-seat of Christ. Nor is it otherwise to those among the poor, whose only care is to provide for the things of the morrow, what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed. To the sons and daughters of pleasure, death is an evil; for it changes the notes of the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe of their feasts, into the saddest sounds of mourning and woe. Indeed, to a very great portion of mankind, "living without God in the world," "minding earthly things," and dying in unprepared death is an evil; for it takes them away from those objects in which alone they delighted, and consigns them to that fearful state in which anguish and vexation of spirit must be their eternal portion.

"Death came into the world by sin;" but thanks be to God, life and immortality were brought to light by Jesus Christ our Lord, who, in his last discourse to his disciples, said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me¹." But as "flesh

¹ John xvii. 24.

and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption¹," it was appointed, that these our frail and sinful bodies should be dissolved by death, that so at the resurrection they might be made "like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." No longer, therefore, let death be dreaded as an evil by those sincere Christians who are about to put off this corruptible for incorruption, and this mortal for immortality, and who then exchange the pains and afflictions, the miseries and vexations, the infirmities, temptations, and sins of this present world, for an eternally fixed state of perfect peace, purity, and happiness in a glorified existence. Was death an evil, or was it not the greatest good to such Christians as Hooker, Herbert, Hall, Sancroft, and Usher? Every disciple of Christ, however humble his condition, may now rejoice in the assurance, "Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." While death is, therefore, the greatest of all evils to those who, being enemies to God, are consigned to an eternity of sorrow, it is the highest good to all those Christians who are meet for heaven, seeing that it

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 50.

translates them to their inheritance with the saints in light. What makes the difference between the two classes thus described? Why is death to one part of mankind the greatest of blessings, to the other the greatest of evils? It is because the former are *prepared*, the latter *unprepared for death*. Is it not of the greatest importance, that we immediately ascertain what is the nature of that preparation so necessary to a happy death? We will therefore suppose, that you are anxiously desiring to know what are some of those rules which may guide you in the performance of a work which, under the Divine blessing, may lead you to a happy death, and a glorious resurrection.

The first rule to be observed in the preparation for a happy death is, *that we have a lively faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and in the efficacy of his atonement*. Every one who feels that he has greatly offended God and entertains a sincere repentance for past sins, will earnestly desire forgiveness. The soul oppressed with a sense of sin will accept with gratitude the offer of pardon on condition of putting her trust in One who is mighty to save. This faith, which appears most necessary, and to many most difficult, will, no doubt, be more easily attained by those who have not been strangers to the tears of penitence. An established faith in

God the Saviour will convey comfort in sorrow, patience under tribulation, and resignation to the will of God: it will also supply motives to duty, and arguments for perseverance. The trials and temptations of the last hour are frequently very great, and we ought not to expect to be "more than conquerors" in our own power: it is only by Him who has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee," that "strength is made perfect in weakness".³ If we build up ourselves on our most holy faith⁴, in "the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting," our Saviour's words will become to us a reality: "the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock".⁵

The second rule necessary to a prudent and safe preparation for a better world is, that we show the sincerity of our faith by the endeavour *to lead a life of holiness while we have time and opportunity*. We endeavour to lead a life of holiness when we strive to bring our motives, thoughts, words, and actions, into unison with the precepts and doctrines of God's holy word. No one has any just reason to expect that he shall "die the death of the righteous" who con-

³ 2 Cor. xii. 9.⁴ Jude 20.⁵ Matt. vii. 25.

tinues to live the life of the unrighteous: we must therefore resolve immediately to forsake our favourite sins, and aim at holiness in all we think, and say, and do. We must not indulge the ruinous thought, that we may go on in our sins the greater part of our lives, and leave to a few weeks or a few hours, at the close of life, that amendment which is so necessary to a holy life. Unspeakable is the danger of leaving this duty to a distant day, when before to-morrow's setting sun, God may end life and all its means of reformation. And who can suppose that "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid," will be deceived by a mere temporary and superficial holiness, which may have been occasioned by the horrors of approaching death, and which may be forsaken as soon as the heavy hand of sickness shall have been withdrawn? Full of grace and comfort is the truth, that "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord;" but a life of wilful sin, so long as it is persisted in and unrepented of, is the way to deprive us of the gift. The most prudent and safe preparation consists, therefore, in the daily exercise of faith, and the habitual cultivation of holiness, from the dawn of reason to the time when we close our eyes in death; so far as that state can be attained by us, in this

our imperfect condition. Far be it from us to affirm that it is absolutely hopeless for any one to receive admission after death into eternal happiness, who has not invariably endeavoured to live a life of holiness; that indeed would be most discouraging to all, and not according with the invitations of Holy Scripture. But this we do affirm, that holiness deferred fearfully perils our eternal happiness, and therefore, that the life of holiness cannot be commenced too early. If we have endeavoured, and are now endeavouring to live this holy life, blessed are we, for we have the prospect of a happy death and a joyful resurrection. But if we have not in times past lived this holy life, we ought to seize the present opportunity and begin it now, for "there is neither work nor device in the grave," whither we are hastening.

The third rule is, *to examine our conduct and compare it with the written word of God.* Self-examination is, no doubt, essential to a holy life and a happy death: but if we never inquire into our principles and motives, never scrutinize our thoughts and actions, never compare them with the Divine commands, so far from "perfecting holiness in the fear of God⁶," we

⁶ 2 Cor. vii. 1.

shall become heedless and unconcerned in all our ways, and, at last, contract the evil habit of omitting the most important duties, and committing the most fatal sins without one sigh of regret, or one pang of remorse. When we consider our constant proneness to sin, the many transgressions of our past lives, and the offences of each returning day, the multitude of idle words, the great portions of time given up to unprofitable and vain pursuits, the hourly forgetfulness of duty, the coldness of our prayers, public and private, the blameableness of our motives, the subtle influences of pride, the pharisaical self-satisfaction in our most imperfect actions, the sinful compliances with a world lying in wickedness, the failings in the performance of relative duties, the idolatry with which we renounce God by bestowing our affections on worldly objects, the tendency to habitual thoughtlessness about the state of the soul, and the nature of her prospects after death; when we consider all this, we cannot surely want another argument to convince us of the need of immediate self-examination. If we have never yet practised this duty, we should first take in the whole compass of our lives, trace out the entire map of our personal history, throughout youth, manhood, and age, so as to call to remembrance our most hidden principles, thoughts, and motives,

and bring before the bar of impartial judgment, our boldest and most presumptuous, as well as our most secret and most cherished sins. But to do this faithfully and efficiently, the mirror of conscience must be cleansed and so brightened, that the reflection therein of our sins and follies may be clearly, truly, and strongly presented to our eyes. Nor is this *primary* and *general* examination of our whole lives sufficient preparation for a dying day. Self-examination should be one of our stated, one of our daily duties, without which we shall live and die in the most lamentable ignorance of the state of the soul when called before the judgment-seat of Christ; therefore to give an application of the uses of self-examination in the words of one of our old Church divines, "As every night we must make our bed the memorial of our grave, so let our evening thoughts be an image of the day of judgment'." If we do not practise self-examination with some degree of regularity and strictness, or if we postpone it to the close of life, and leave it as a death-bed duty, then all our unnoticed and unrepented sins will, in the mean time, have accumulated fearfully in number and magnitude; so that if the Holy Ghost commission the conscience to rise before us on

⁷ Holy Living and Dying.

our death-bed as an accusing⁸, instead of a consoling spirit, and to "bring all things to remembrance," as He frequently does, then "we shall think it better to pull the napkin before our eyes, than to stare upon the circumstances of our death⁹." But what reasonable or prudent man, who knows the value of his soul, and foresees all the consequences of its loss, would wish so to blind himself and take a leap into eternity? Yet this conduct, with all its irreparable evils, would seem to be the natural result of neglecting self-examination for the present, and postponing it to a death-bed. On the other hand, a daily self-examination, though it may have its difficulties at first, yet, like the practice of every other religious duty, the sooner it is commenced, the easier will be the performance of it, the greater the delight, and the more evident the advantages.

The fourth rule to be observed in a due preparation for death is, *that we repent us truly of our former sins*. Self-examination must not end in self-knowledge: it should proceed to sincere repentance and earnest desires of amendment; for without this we have no good ground to expect the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. The necessity of repentance must be admitted when we re-

⁸ Rom. ii. 15.

⁹ Holy Living and Dying.

member that St. John the Baptist began his preaching by saying, "Repent ye¹," and that our Saviour Himself in the opening of his ministry enforced the same duty². A precept which is urged on such authority, and is singled out from all others so as to be first presented to us for our observance, should receive our immediate and earnest attention. The duty of repentance should not be delayed; for we know not how soon the opportunity may be taken away by sickness and death. It should not be carelessly performed; for unless it be sincere, we shall not obtain remission of our sins: we should therefore pray that the Holy Spirit, without whom we can do nothing, would awaken our souls, convince them of sin, and impress upon them a deep contrition for all those faults of omission and commission, whether of ignorance, presumption, or infirmity, which self-examination in the strict survey of our past lives may have spread before us. We should also pray that Almighty God, by the same Spirit, would somewhat proportion our sense of sorrow to the great number and aggravated nature of our sins, and to the infinite hatred of all sin by Him who is perfect in holiness, purity, and justice. To quicken the sense of contrition we should re-

¹ Matt. iii. 2.

² Mark i. 15.

member, that these sins have been committed against our best Friend, our loving Father and kind Protector, who instead of cutting us off in the midst of our sins, has mercifully preserved us and brought us through many dangers unto this day for the gracious purpose of amendment ; and for this end has given us Apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and teachers, to warn us to forsake our sins, and to persuade us to turn to Him, that we may not die eternally ; and also has sent His beloved Son into the world, that whosoever believeth on Him may have everlasting life. These considerations ought to impart sincerity to our repentance, and poignancy of spirit to our contrition. I will only add, that if we would set apart some time in which to withdraw from the world and confess our sins to God, recounting and calling them by name, a very important and necessary link would be supplied between self-examination and repentance. If we could be persuaded to adopt this practice, a desire for holiness would lead to self-examination, and self-examination with confession of sins would prepare the way for daily repentance and daily petitions for the remission of our sins. By so doing we shall experience also this unspeakable advantage, that when we arrive at our last hour the number and weight of our unrepented, unforgiven sins,

which would otherwise have appalled the soul, will thus have been so gradually and sensibly lessened, that the spirit, freed from all fear and amazement, may have liberty to contemplate in a tranquil frame the remaining steps of her progress to a glorious eternity.

The fifth rule to be observed in a preparation for a happy death is, *to cultivate the spirit of prayer*. Prayer is a channel by which God conveys to us supplies of faith, holiness, self-knowledge, and repentance, of which we have already spoken, together with love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, and all those graces and virtues which cheer the Christian in life, and comfort him in the hour of death. No man who lives in the neglect of prayer, public or private, is fit for death or judgment. To remind us of our own mortality, and to prevent too great an attachment to the changeful scenes of life, our prayers should frequently turn upon those things which we are too apt to forget, or are not desirous to remember,—the uncertainty of life, and the need of Divine grace in the trying scenes of sickness and death. Before we enter the house of prayer, and before we bend the knee in our more private devotions, let us frequently and seriously, in imagination, place ourselves on our death-bed, and ask ourselves what are the dispositions with

which we would then pray, and what are the things which would then appear most necessary for us to obtain ; with an eternal world before us, and the judgment-seat of Christ almost in view, what wrestling in prayer ! what earnestness ! what solemnity ! But let us remember that we have the same souls to be lost or saved, the same boundless eternity outstretched before us, and the same Judge waiting to approve or condemn. A consideration that "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," the graves will be opened, and the dead awakened by the sound of the trump and the voice of God, to give an account of the things done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil, will make the wise and prudent "watch and pray."

The sixth rule to be observed in our preparation for a happy death is, *that we read daily some portion of the word of God.* There are few parts of the Divine Word more deeply affecting, more awfully impressive, or more full of practical wisdom, than those which speak of the shortness and uncertainty of life, and the danger of being unprepared for death and judgment. Man is therein likened to the most changeable, short-lived, swift, and evanescent things in creation. He is a vapour which appeareth for a little while, then vanisheth away ; a flower which fadeth ; a

post which passeth by; an eagle which darteth through the air; a ship which courseth through the sea; a shuttle which shoots through the web; a leaf which falls and dies. In the same Holy Scriptures we read those precepts which are suitable to this our frail condition: "Watch and pray;" "Be ye also ready;" "And because the Lord will do this thing unto thee, O Israel, prepare to meet thy God!" "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom;" "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" The same Holy Scriptures which so frequently and forcibly press these most solemn truths and precepts upon our minds, reveal to us for our encouragement the glorious scenes of immortality and the resurrection to eternal life.

We should also read the Holy Scriptures daily, because by an acquaintance with them we may "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ³," whom to know is life eternal⁴. Our unceasing contact with an evil world secretly forms within us principles and practices which would unfit us for heaven, the presence of God, and the society of just men made perfect; and it is only by daily reading the Holy Scriptures,

³ 2 Pet. iii. 18.

⁴ John xvii. 3.

and by taking its eternal rules of truth and holiness as our standard, that we can hope clearly to see and fully to amend our worldly thoughts and actions : so that a daily reading in the Bible would instruct us not only how to live, but also in what way we may best prepare for that blessed welcome, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Often have we heard men on their death-beds bitterly bewail the many days, months, and years they have given to worldly amusements, reading, and pursuits which "profit not in the day of wrath⁵:" never have we heard one in his dying hour lament the time which has been devoted in health and strength to the perusal of the sacred page. There are the promises to refresh our souls ; thence must we draw the pure waters of comfort. The Holy Scriptures are the scale and chart of Divine truth, by which we are to ascertain our present position, and measure the progress we are making toward the kingdom of heaven. In the Holy Scriptures we not only view the cloud of witnesses, who in their lives and deaths bear testimony to the sustaining power of faith and to the fulfilment of the Divine promises, but we see a record of those rules of conduct and habits

⁵ Prov. xi. 4.

of life by which, through the mercy of Christ and the influence of the Holy Spirit, they were made inheritors with the saints in light. Their watchfulness and devotion, their patience and resignation, their faith and holiness, their experience of Divine support, and all the precepts of wisdom so useful to those who would die a happy death, are therein traced out by an unerring hand for our improvement. Considering the many advantages you will derive from the daily habit of reading the Holy Scriptures, we most earnestly advise you never to allow any worldly business or amusement to prevent you from the performance of this duty.

Lastly, it is necessary that in the preparation for a happy death *we rightly consider the uses and ends of the two sacraments, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord*, in order that we may derive from them the benefits they were designed to convey. The more frequently we call to mind, and the more conscientiously we endeavour to live up to those vows and promises which were made for us at our Baptism, and afterwards ratified by us in the rite of Confirmation, the better prepared shall we be to meet the Lord at his coming. From the time when we were admitted by baptism into Christ's Church militant here below, until we join his Church triumphant above, we should

strive daily to be his faithful soldiers and servants, and maintain this character, whether in health or in sickness, in life or in the approaches of death. The deeper the recollection is engraven on our minds, that "we are the children of God and heirs of the kingdom of heaven," and the more uniformly we cultivate the tempers, dispositions, and habits befitting this Divine relationship, the less reluctance we shall have to hear the voice which summons us to take possession of our eternal inheritance.

He who would prepare himself for a happy death should also be "religiously and devoutly disposed to receive the most comfortable sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, in remembrance of his meritorious cross and passion, whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven." As the weary traveller when journeying through the desert feels grateful for the food which the hand of God has provided for him, and supported and cheered thereby pursues his way with renewed zeal and perseverance, until he arrives at his journey's end, so the Christian pilgrim will take every befitting opportunity to receive by faith the spiritual food of the body and blood of Christ, by which his soul, strengthened and refreshed, may be enabled to go on her way rejoicing; and there

will be this unspeakable advantage arising from a reception of the holy Communion of the body and blood of Christ, while in the enjoyment of health and strength, that when sickness lays us low, we shall not be tossed to and fro in doubts and fears whether we *may* receive the consecrated elements, but shall rather rejoice in the outpouring comfort, as the Minister when bending over the couch assures us that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," and bids us feed on Him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving. Encouraged by these promises, and strengthened by Divine grace imparted in the holy Sacrament, the expiring Christian may say with the dying St. Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

To those who carefully follow these seven rules the Holy Spirit will whisper these comforting words: "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant *."

We now turn to a consideration of the design

* Heb. xii. 22—24.

and uses of the following examples afforded in the “*Memorials of the Departure of Christians.*”

Though rules and precepts may not be without their benefit, and we would hope that the foregoing, which are founded on Scripture and reason, will have commended themselves to every man’s conscience, yet we know that good examples very commonly produce a most favourable impression.

When the inspired Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews desired to persuade his converts “to run with patience the race that was set before them,” to meet with constancy and resignation their approaching trials, and especially to relieve them from all unbecoming fears of death, he did not enter into abstract reasons, but directed their attention to the *examples* of those who were gone before; he recounted them by name, from the time of Abel down to the days of Samuel, David, and the prophets, and upon this evidence proved the power and efficacy of faith by which they triumphed over danger, death, and the grave. The sacred writer then drew their attention to that perfect pattern for all Christians, Jesus Christ, “the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross.”

And may we not also rejoice when we see that, as in every former age, the children of God have been, so may all Christians assuredly be now,

“ more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us ;” and that there is no pain, no fear, no suffering, no trial, however great, which may not be lessened or overcome by faith in God, “ who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ ?” Suitable is the observation of Bishop Hooper, “ Wherefore it is my belief, that which sufficed them, sufficeth us ; and the faith which saved them in Christ, saveth us ; except God be changed, and hath made new ways to heaven since their death.”

Take courage, O ye of little faith ! and whether sick, infirm, or aged, contemplate, we beseech you, this additional cloud of witnesses presented by our own beloved Church ⁷, for these are the first-fruits of her dead ; and let us feel assured on their united testimony, that in the last great conflict with the King of Terrors, the Holy Spirit has, in these latter ages also, alleviated the pangs of the children of God, changed their sorrows into joy of heart, and their mournful themes into songs

⁷ We never can more sensibly, more gratefully, feel the privilege of being members of the Church of England, than when we contemplate this her glorious cloud of witnesses. These are her first-fruits of the dead, and we may be assured that the stock which produced them, has been planted and nurtured by a Divine hand. In this, as in other cases, we shall do right to judge of the tree by its fruits.

of holy triumph. If such have been the salutary effects in those instances adduced, why may they not be so in yours, especially when you receive the assurance, "I am the Lord, I change not"; and when you see that Jesus Christ is declared in Holy Scripture to be "the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever"?

Other benefits may be derived from contemplating this cloud of witnesses presented by our Church, and they are so well summed up by the judicious Richard Hooker, that we cannot do better than conclude with his words. In his sermon on "A remedy against Sorrow and Fear" he thus writes. "The death of the saints of God is precious in his sight; and shall it seem unto us superfluous, at such times as these are, to hear in what manner they have ended their lives? The Lord Himself hath not disdained so exactly to register in the Book of Life after what sort his servants have closed up their days on earth, that He descendeth even to their meanest (*i. e.* lowliest) actions, what they have spoken unto their children, kinsfolk, and friends; the setting of their eyes, their cries, their groans, their pantings, breathings, and last gaspings, He hath most solemnly commended unto the memory of all generations. The care of

⁸ Mal. iii. 6.

⁹ Heb. xiii. 8.

the living both to live and die well, must needs be somewhat increased when they know that their departure shall not be folded up in silence, but the ears of many be made acquainted with it. Again, when they hear how mercifully God has dealt with others in the hour of their last need, besides the praise which they give to God, and the joy which they have, or should have, by reason of their fellowship and communion of saints, is not their hope also much confirmed against the day of their own dissolution? Finally, the sound of these things doth not so pass the ears of them that are most loose and dissolute of life, but it causeth them, some time or other, to wish in their hearts, *Oh, that we might die the death of the righteous, and that our end might be like his !*"

LAST HOURS OF CHRISTIANS.



JOHN WICKLIF, D.D.

DIED 1384. AGED 60.

HE was Professor of Theology in Oxford, and Rector of Lutterworth in Leicestershire; but most generally known as "The Morning Star of the Reformation." The last period of his life he spent at Lutterworth. A portion of each morning, it is said, he regularly devoted to the relief of the necessitous, to the consolation of the afflicted, and to the discharge of every pious office, by the bed of sickness and death. Every thing which is actually

known respecting Wicklif combines to render this account entirely credible.

The duties of the Christian ministry form the subject of a considerable portion of his writings. To the faithfulness and assiduity with which he discharged one very essential portion of those duties, the extant manuscripts of his parochial discourses bear ample and honourable testimony. "Good priests," he himself tells us, "who live well, in purity of thought, and speech, and deed, and in good example to the people, who teach the law of God, up to their knowledge, and labour fast, (i. e. much,) day and night, to learn it better, and teach it openly and constantly, these are very prophets of God, and holy angels of God, and the spiritual lights of the world ! Thus said God by his prophets, and Jesus Christ in his Gospel ; and saints declare it well by authority and reason ¹."

It is surely delightful to believe that the people of Lutterworth had before their eyes the living and breathing form of that holy benevolence which is here portrayed with so much admirable simplicity and beauty.

We now proceed to describe the concluding scenes of his life. The man who for more than twenty years had made the kingdom echo with his testimony against the corruptions of the Church of Rome was, nevertheless, preserved to close his immortal labours by a peaceful death ². After his settlement at Lutterworth, his infirmities compelled him to ease the burden of his parochial duties by the assistance of a curate. To the last, however, he

¹ MS. for the Order of Priesthood, cited by Vaughan, vol. ii. p. 259.

² "Admirable," says Fuller, "that a hare so often hunted, with so many packs of dogs, should die at last quietly sitting in his form."—*Church Hist.* p. 42.

did not wholly discontinue his personal ministrations, and it was his happiness to finish his course in the public execution of his holy office. On the twenty-ninth of December, 1384, he was mortally seized with paralysis in his church. The attack was so severe as to deprive him of speech, and to render him utterly helpless. In this condition he lingered two days, and was finally taken to his rest on the last day of the year².

In 1415 an order was issued, according to which the remains of Wicklif were afterwards disinterred, and burned, and the ashes cast into the adjoining brook called the Swift. "But though they digged up his body, burned his bones, and drowned his ashes, yet the Word of God and truth of his doctrine, with the truth and success thereof, they could not burn, which yet to this day, for the most part of his articles, do remain." "The brook," says Fuller, "did convey his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wicklif are the emblems of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

In his work named "The Poor Caitiff," Dr. John Wicklif thus writes on the Resurrection:—"All mankind shall rise at the day of doom, from death to life, in body and soul together, each in his own kind, and in his own body, incorruptible and immortal. And though the body were burned with fire, and the powder thereof thrown into the four seas that go about the world, yet the soul and it shall come together again, and rise from death to life at the dreadful doom, and from that day forward never after depart. And they that have

² Life of Dr. Wicklif, by the Rev. Charles Webb Le Bas.

evil lived, and ended in deadly sin, shall go in body and soul to pain for evermore; and they that have lived well and kept the commands of God, and fulfilled the deeds of mercy after their power, and ended in charity to God and man, shall go, body and soul together, to bliss for evermore."



REV. WILLIAM TYNDALE.

DIED 1536.

FEW men more essentially promoted the cause of the Reformation in England than did Tyndale, by publishing his translation of the New Testament from the original Greek into English. With Miles Coverdale he commenced translating the Pentateuch, and subsequently the book of the prophet Jonas, which, with the New Testament, previously translated by him and others, formed the whole of his labours on the Scriptures.

Towards the close of his life he retired to Antwerp, where he reserved or hallowed to himself two days of the week, which he named his days of pastime, and those were Monday and

Saturday. On the Monday he visited all such poor men and women as were fled out of England; and those he did very liberally comfort and relieve, and in like manner provided for the sick and diseased persons. On the Saturday he walked round about the town, seeking out every corner and hole where he suspected any poor person to dwell; and where he found any who were overburdened with children, or were aged or weak, those also he plentifully relieved. And thus every week he spent his two days of pastime, as he called them.

The dreadful spirit of the times would not leave Tyndale unmolested at Antwerp, where one Phillips was employed to betray him to the emperor's procurator, by whom Tyndale was taken to the castle of Filford, eighteen miles from Antwerp. He refused to employ any advocate, saying, that he would answer for himself; and so he did: although he deserved no death, he was condemned, and put to death¹.

He had himself written about the blessedness of Faith as a preparation for death. Let us use the following as a precept: Above all things, take unto you the shield of faith, wherewith ye may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, that ye may be able to resist in the evil day of temptation, and especially at the hour of death.

¹ Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog. vol. ii. 1839.



LADY JANE GREY.

DIED 1554.

LADY Jane Grey (Dudley) was executed in the reign of Queen Mary. On her receiving the notice that she must prepare for her approaching death, she said, "You are much deceived if you think I had any desire of life, for I assure you that I long for nothing so much as death."

The following is a brief extract from the letter which she wrote to her father but a few days before she suffered death; she being then about eighteen years of age. "Father, I can so patiently take it, as I yield God more hearty thanks for shortening my woeful days, than if all the world had been given into my possession with life lengthened to my will. Thus, good father, I have opened my state to you, whose death is at hand; although to you, perhaps, it may seem right woeful, to me there is nothing more welcome, than from this vale of misery to aspire to that heavenly throne of all joys and pleasure with Christ our Saviour; in whose steadfast faith, if it be lawful for the daughter so to write to her

father, the Lord that hitherto hath strengthened, so continue you, that at last we may meet in heaven, with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." To Lord Guildford Dudley, her husband, she said, that in the other world "friendships were happy, and unions indissoluble, and that theirs would be eternal, if their souls carried with them nothing of terrestrial, which might hinder them from rejoicing." Her last words were, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

An exhortation written by Lady Jane Dudley, the night before her execution, at the end of the New Testament, which she sent to her sister, the Lady Catharine Grey :

"I have here sent you, my dear sister Catharine, a book, which although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, or the curious embroidery of the artfullest needles, yet inwardly it is more worth than all the precious mines which the vast world can boast of; it is The Book, my only best beloved sister, of the Law of the Lord; it is the Testament and last will, which He bequeathed unto us wretches and wretched sinners, which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy; and if you with a good mind read it, and with an earnest mind follow, no doubt it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life; it will teach you to live, and learn you to die; it shall win you more and endow you with greater felicity than you should have gained of our woeful father's lands; for as if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his honours and manors, so if you apply diligently to this book, seeking to direct your life according to the rule of the same, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, neither the thief shall steal, neither yet the moths corrupt.

Desire with David, my best sister, to understand the law of the Lord your God : live still to die, that you by death may purchase eternal life, and trust not that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life ; for unto God, when He calleth, all hours, times, seasons are alike : and blessed are they whose lamps are furnished when He cometh, for as soon will the Lord be glorified in the young as the old. My good sister, once more, again, let me entreat you to learn to die : deny the world, defy the devil, and despise the flesh, and delight yourself only in the Lord. Be penitent for your sins, and yet despair not ; be strong in faith, yet presume not ; and desire with St. Paul to be dissolved and to be with Christ, with whom, even in death, there is life. Be like the good servant, and even at midnight be waking, lest when death cometh and stealeth upon you, like a thief in the night, you be, with the servants of darkness, found sleeping ; and lest when for lack of oil you be found like the five foolish virgins, or like him that had not on the wedding-garment, and then you be cast into darkness or banished from the marriage. Rejoice in Christ, as I trust you do : and seeing you have the name of a Christian, as near as you can, follow the steps, and be a true imitator of your master, Christ Jesus, and take up your cross, lay your sins upon his back, and always embrace Him.

“ Now, as touching my death, rejoice, as I do, my dearest sister, that I shall be delivered of this corruption, and put on incorruption ; for I am assured that I shall, for losing of a mortal life, win one that is immortal, joyful, and everlasting. The which I pray God grant you in his most blessed hour, and send you his all-saving grace to live in his fear, and to die in the true Christian faith ; from which, in God’s name, I exhort you, that you never

swerve, neither through hope of life, nor fear of death ; for if you will deny Him, to give length to a weary and corrupt breath, God Himself will deny you, and by vengeance make short what you by your soul's loss would prolong ; but if you will cleave to Him, He will stretch forth your days to an uncircumscribed comfort, and to his own glory ; to the which glory, God bring me now, and you hereafter, when it shall please Him to call you. Farewell, once again, my beloved sister, and put your only trust in God, who only must help you. Amen.

“Your loving sister,
“JANE DUDLEY².”

REFLECTION.—In trouble, sickness, and the approach of death, let us seek our consolations in the Word of God, and we shall not be disappointed ; for heaven and earth shall perish, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.

JOHN REDMAYNE, D.D.

DIED 1551. AGED 51.

HE was one of the compilers of the Liturgy of the Church of England. In his last sickness, at Westminster, finding himself decay apace, he sent for Dr. Alexander Nowell, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, and some other of the reformed divines ; and to prevent any misinterpretation after his death, he made before them a full declaration of his

² Writings of Edward VI., Lady Jane Grey, and others. 8vo. London, 1831.

judgment concerning the chief controversies of those times, which he desired them to attest.

When Dr. Redmayne had finished his declaration, he discoursed more largely on some of these points, and that in so pathetic and affecting a manner, that Dr. Young, one of the divines there present, who was not then entirely free from the prejudices of his education, declared that he was so moved and convinced, that he now doubted of the truth of some things, for which, before, he would have suffered martyrdom.

After this, Dr. Redmayne's whole discourse was of the joys of heaven, the last judgment, and of our redemption through the merits of Jesus Christ; with whom he earnestly longed to be. He would often, with tears of joy, praise and extol the ineffable love of our gracious Redeemer to us miserable sinners; and exhorted his friends to be always prepared for Christ's coming, to love one another, to beware of this corrupt world, and entirely to wean their affections from its transitory glories and deceitful pleasures. He bore his sickness with the greatest patience, and a perfect resignation to the will of God, whether for life or death; yet he wished rather, if it were God's blessed will, to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, and to be delivered from the troubles and temptations of this miserable world; and when he found his end approaching, he broke out into this fervent prayer, "Thy will, O blessed Lord, be fulfilled! Oh! God of all comfort, give me grace to have comfort in Thee, and to have my mind wholly fixed on Thee!" And, after a short pause, he added, "God grant us grace, that we may have the true understanding of his word, the true use of his sacraments, and ever preach and maintain the truth, to the glory of his most holy

name.” Then he offered up another short petition for the unity of the Church, and soon after resigned his pious and holy soul to God³.

MEDITATION.—“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit⁴.”



KING EDWARD VI.

DIED 1553. AGED 16.

THIS excellent prince was the son of King Henry VIII. and Queen Jane Seymour, and was born at Hampton Court. His promising qualities, and his great zeal in promoting the reformed religion, will give an interest to the following particulars of his last hours.

In the time of this good king's illness, Dr. Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London, in a sermon

³ Downe's Lives of the Compilers of the Liturgy, prefixed to Dr. Sparrow's Exposition of the Book of Common Prayer.

⁴ 1 Cor. ii. 9.

before him, much commended works of charity, and showed that as they were enjoined on all men, so especially on those in high stations. The same day, after dinner, the king sent for the doctor into his gallery, made him sit in a chair by him, and would not suffer him to be uncovered. Then, after thanking the doctor for his sermon, he repeated the chief heads of it, and added, "I took myself to be chiefly touched by your discourse; for as in the kingdom I am next under God, so ought I most nearly approach to Him in goodness and mercy. As our miseries stand most in need of help from Him, so are we the greatest debtors; and therefore as you have given me this general exhortation, direct me, I intreat you, by what particular act I may best discharge my duty." The result of this conference was a determination in the king to found, and endow with ample revenues, those excellent institutions, Christ's Hospital, St. Thomas's, and Bridewell.

About three hours before his decease, with his eyes closed, and supposing that no one heard him, he offered up the following prayer, "O Lord God, deliver me out of this miserable and wretched life, and take me among thy chosen: Howbeit, not my will, but thine be done. Lord, I commit my spirit to Thee. O Lord, Thou knowest how happy it were for me to be with Thee; yet for thy chosen's sake, send me life and health, that I may truly serve Thee. O my Lord God, bless thy people, and save thine inheritance. O Lord God, save thy chosen people of England. O my Lord God, defend this realm from papistry, and maintain thy true religion, that I and my people may praise thy Holy Name, for thy Son Jesus Christ his sake." Then turning his face, and seeing some near him, he said, "Are you so

nigh? I thought you had been further off." His last words were, "I am faint. Lord, have mercy upon me, and take my spirit."

Thus died this blessed king, our young Josias⁵.

REFLECTION.—Death knocks at the palace gate, and the cottage door. He calls aloud to the young and the aged: "Prepare to meet thy God⁶."



BISHOP HOOPER.

DIED FEB. 9, 1555.

DR. JOHN HOOPER, Bishop of Gloucester, was eminent for his piety and meekness of character; and he was one of the noble army of martyrs. A short time before his death he said, "I am come hither to end this life, and to suffer death here, because I will not gainsay the former truth that I have heretofore taught among you

⁵ Writings of Edward the VI. (with a Notice of his Life), Lady Jane Grey, and others. 8vo. 1831.

⁶ Amos iv. 12.

in this diocese (of Gloucester) and elsewhere. True it is, that death is bitter and life is sweet; but, alas! consider that the death to come is more bitter, and the life to come is more sweet. Therefore, for the desire and love I have to the one, and the terror and fear of the other, I do not so much regard this death, nor esteem this life, but have settled myself, through the strength of God's Holy Spirit, patiently to pass through the torments and extremities of the fire now prepared for me, rather than to deny the truth of his word, desiring you and others, in the mean time, to commend me to God's mercy in your prayers."

A short time before the Bishop suffered he was heard thus to pray: "Lord, Thou art a gracious God, and a merciful Redeemer. Have mercy therefore upon me, after thy great mercy, and according to thine inestimable goodness. Thou art ascended into heaven; receive me to be partaker of thy joys, where Thou sittest in equal glory with thy Father. Strengthen me of thy goodness, that I break not the rules of patience; or else assuage the terror of the pains, as shall seem most to thy glory." To others he observed, "I doubt not but God will give strength to abide the extremity of the fire." His last words were, "Lord Jesu, have mercy upon me. Lord Jesu, have mercy upon me: Lord Jesu, receive my spirit." It is remarked, that notwithstanding his great sufferings, he died as quietly as a child in his bed: and we may hope that, as a blessed martyr, he now shares in the bliss prepared for the faithful in Christ before the foundation of the world: for whose constancy, all Christians are bound to praise God⁷.

⁷ Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog., vol. ii.

The following are some of Bishop Hooper's Reflections on death:—1. He is blessed that loseth his life full of mortal miseries, and findeth the life full of eternal joys. 2. It is a grief to depart from goods and friends; but yet not so much as to depart from grace and heaven itself. 3. There is neither felicity nor adversity of this world, that can appear to be great, if it be weighed with the joys or pains in the world to come. 4. Beware of looking too much on the felicity or the misery of this world; for the consideration and earnest love or fear of either draweth from God. 5. Seeing all our salvation resteth in this, that we die in the Lord, whiles we be in health, let us learn this doctrine well, and exercise the same. 6. It is not a Christian's part to sleep in sin, as an ill soldier, till the trump blow; neither yet to provide for weapon only till his enemy be upon him; but to have it ready, that it serve as time and necessity requireth. 7. Live hereafter virtuously, that ye may die godly. 8. Make ready, therefore, while ye have time for yourselves, in the blood of Christ, and study amendment of life. 9. Of none ye may learn so well as by the life and death, and also the doctrine, of the patriarchs, prophets, Christ, and the apostles; whose example, if ye follow not here, in case hereafter ye never come where they be, thank yourselves.



BISHOPS LATIMER AND RIDLEY.

DIED OCT. 16, 1555.

HUGH LATIMER was Bishop of Worcester: Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London. Latimer assisted Cranmer in the composition of the Homilies. Ridley was instrumental in settling the Articles, the Liturgy, and the Homilies. They both suffered for the truth on the same day, nearly opposite Balliol College, Oxford. When arrived at the place appointed for their suffering, Latimer said to Ridley, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." Ridley's last words were, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." Latimer, on the other side, as earnestly praying, "O Father of heaven, receive my soul." At last Ridley fell down at Latimer's feet.

We are informed by Dr. Gloucester Ridley, that Bishop Ridley had prepared himself for his approaching death, which a sound judgment and a good conscience made him look upon as a matter

of joy and triumph. He called it his marriage, and behaved with as much ease and cheerfulness as ever. At supper he invited Mrs. Irish (the wife of the gaoler), and the rest of the company, to his marriage the next morning. And wishing his sister to be there, he asked her husband, "Whether she could find it in her heart to be there or no?" who answered, "He believed she would with all her heart;" at which Bishop Ridley expressed great satisfaction. This discourse melted Mrs. Irish into tears. On seeing her tears the good bishop comforted her, and said, "You love me not now, I see well enough. For in that you weep, it doth appear that you will not be at my marriage, neither be content therewith. Indeed you be not my friend, as I thought you had been; but quiet yourself; though my breakfast shall be somewhat sharp and painful, yet I am sure my supper shall be more pleasant and sweet." When they arose from the table, his brother offered to watch all night with him, but he would not suffer him, saying, "That he minded (God willing) to go to bed, and to sleep as quietly that night as ever he did in his life^s."

Precepts and Maxims from the writings of Bishop Ridley:—1. Although the hope of His mercy is my sheet-anchor of eternal salvation, yet am I persuaded, that whosoever wittingly neglecteth and regardeth not to clear his conscience, he cannot have peace with God, nor a lively faith in his mercy. 2. All our care is and shall be, by God's grace, to please and serve Him, of whom we look and hope, after this temporal and momentary misery, to have

^s Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog., vol. ii. iii.

eternal joy and perpetual felicity. 3. We all here be in good health and comfort, watching with our lamps alight, when it shall please our Master, the bridegroom, to call us to wait upon Him to the marriage. 4. What though our troubles here be painful for the time, and the sting of death bitter and unpleasant, yet we know that they shall not last in comparison of eternity; no, not the twinkling of an eye. 5. This death of the Christian is not to be called death, but rather a gate or entrance into everlasting life. 6. Let us comfort our hearts in all troubles and in death, with the word of God: for heaven and earth shall perish; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.

Latimer's Precepts and Maxims from his sermons and letters:—1. We esteem it to be a great thing to have a kingdom: how much more then should we regard the kingdom which Christ our Saviour offereth unto us, which kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, where there shall be no end of joy and felicity? 2. If we should know the day or the hour at what time He would come, no doubt we should be careless. Lest we should be made careless, this day is hidden from us. 3. Embrace Christ's cross, and Christ shall embrace you. 4. It is not I, without his mighty helping hand, that can abide that brunt; but I have trust that God will help me in time of need. 5. If in taking up the cross we must also follow Christ, then we may not cast the same off, until we have carried it with Him unto death.

REV. JOHN PHILPOT.

DIED 1555.

JOHN PHILPOT was one of the noble army of martyrs. He was a very eminent divine of New College, Oxford, and archdeacon of Winchester. The following passage is selected from one of his latest letters to the Lady Vane:—"The world wonders we can be merry in such extreme misery; but our God is omnipotent, who turns misery into felicity. Believe me, dear sister, there is no such joy in the world, as the people of Christ have under the cross. I speak by experience; therefore believe me, and fear nothing that the world can do; for when they imprison our bodies, they set at liberty our souls; when they kill us, they send us to everlasting life. And what greater glory can there be, than to be made conformable to our Head, Christ? And we are made so by afflictions: this is the way, though it be but narrow, which is full of the peace of God, and leadeth to eternal bliss."

In another letter to the same lady, he wrote thus:—"I that am under the Cross, have felt more joy and consolation under it, than ever I did by any benefit that God hath given me in all my life before: for the more the world hates, the nigher God is to us; and there is no joy but in God."—"Pray instantly that this joy may never be taken from us; for it passeth all the delights of this world. This is the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and therefore cannot faint either in fire or water⁹."

⁹ Dr. Philpot's Letters.

He was burned to death at Smithfield, where he kissed the stake, saying, "Shall I disdain to suffer at this stake, when my Lord and Saviour refused not to suffer a most vile death for me?"

REFLECTION.—If the martyrs could endure such excruciating pains, and even praise God in the fires, how much rather ought we to bear with patience the gentler dispensations of Divine Providence, by which, ordinarily, He removes us from this world to a better; especially seeing that the same God and Saviour who was with them to comfort them in their more painful agonies, will surely be with us!



ARCHBISHOP CRANMER.

DIED 1556. AGED 67.

CRANMER, the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, was a zealous promoter of the Reformation, and the most distinguished of those men who laid down their lives in the cause of the reformed religion. The first step which he took to

bring about the Reformation, was to procure the Convocation to petition the King that the Bible might be translated into English : when published, and recommended by royal authority, he dispersed it as much as possible. He crowned King Edward the Sixth ; caused the Homilies to be composed ; and, through his means, the Book of Common Prayer was finished, and settled by act of parliament, as were the Articles of the Church of England.

The fatal day (the 21st of March, 1555-6) had now arrived, on which Cranmer was to be committed to the flames. When he came to the place, opposite Balliol College, Oxford, where the holy bishops and martyrs of God, Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley, had been burnt before him, for the confessing of the truth, kneeling down, he prayed to God ; and, not long tarrying in his prayers, putting off his garments, he prepared himself to his death. His linen was made long, down to his feet. His feet were bare ; likewise his head, when both his caps were off, was so bare, that one hair could not be seen upon it. His beard was long and thick, covering his face with marvellous gravity. Then was an iron chain tied about him, whom, when they perceived to be more stedfast than that he could be moved from his sentence, they commanded the fire to be set unto him. And when the wood was kindled, and the fire began to burn near him, stretching out his arm, he put into the flame his right hand, with which he had signed his former recantation¹, and which he

¹ Strype informs us that Archbishop Cranmer was subtilly drawn in by the Papists to subscribe, by way of recantation, six different papers ; the first being expressed in ambiguous words, capable of a favourable construction. The five following were added as explanations of it.

held so stedfast and immoveable, saving that once with the same hand he wiped his face, that all men might see his hand burned before his body was touched. His body did so abide the burning of the flame, with such constancy and stedfastness, that, standing always in one place, without moving his body, he seemed to move no more than the stake to which he was bound: his eyes were lifted up unto heaven, and oftentimes he repeated, "This unworthy right hand!" so long as his voice would suffer him; and using often the words of St. Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," in the greatness of the flame he gave up the ghost².

REFLECTION.—We may learn from this example, that in life the fears of death frequently overcome our resolution; but that while in the act of death the Christian is strengthened and upheld by Him, who in his own person conquered death.



ROGER ASCHAM.

DIED 1568. AGED 53.

ROGER ASCHAM was preceptor to Queen Elizabeth. On the 23rd of December, 1568, he was

² Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog., vol. iii.

seized with an aguish distemper, which threatened him with immediate death. Dr. Alexander Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's, often visited him during his illness, and supported and comforted him, by setting before him the sufferings of earth, and the prospects of heaven, but in a strain and manner so divine, that, when he had left the room, the sick man declared with joy, that "the excellent dean had sustained his soul with food that would never die."

His disease soon grew more and more oppressive, but he rehearsed on his death-bed a variety of passages expressive of the mercy and love of God to mankind, and of his blessings bestowed on them. To the learned Edward Graunt, one of the prebendaries of Westminster, who came to visit him, he said, "This is my confession and faith, this is my prayer and all that I long for, I desire to depart and be with Christ." These were his last words³.

REFLECTION.—In the hour of sickness and in the full prospect of eternity we perceive the passing nature of all things here below. At that period, religion, the Bible, Christian consolations, and a view by the eye of faith of future joys, not only support the dying Christian, but give him a foretaste of heaven itself.

³ Life by Graunt, Churton's Life by Nowell, Biog. Brit.



BISHOP JEWELL.

DIED 1571. AGED 49.

DR. JOHN JEWELL was eminent for piety, learning, and meekness of disposition: he was Bishop of Salisbury, and the patron of Richard Hooker.

We are informed by his biographer, that when he was urged not to exert himself too much by preaching on a certain occasion, as it was better that the people should want one sermon than be altogether deprived of such a preacher, the bishop replied, "It best becometh a bishop to die preaching," seriously thinking perhaps upon the comfortable assurance of his Master, "Happy art thou, my servant, if when I come, I find thee doing." Wherefore that he might not deceive the people's expectation, he ascended the pulpit; and now nothing but spirit, (his flesh being pined away and exhausted,) read his text out of Galatians v. 25, "Walk in the Spirit," and with much pain made an end of his discourse. Presently after the conclusion, he was forced to take his bed, and concluded that his dissolution was not far off.

The following Saturday, nature shrinking and

failing, he called all his household about him, and, after an exposition of the Lord's Prayer, thus breathed forth his last address :

“ I see that now I am to go the way of all flesh, and I feel the arrows of death already fastened in my body ; wherefore I am desirous, in a few words, whilst yet my most merciful God vouchsafeth me the use of my tongue, to speak unto you all. It was my prayer always unto God, since I had my understanding, that I might honour his name with the sacrifice of my flesh, and confirm his truth with the oblation of this my body unto death, in the defence thereof ; which seeing He hath not granted me in this, yet I somewhat rejoice and solace myself that it is worn away and exhausted in the labours of my calling. For while I visit the people of God, God, my God, hath visited me. I beseech you all that are about me, and all others whom I ever offended, to forgive me. And now that my hour is at hand, and all my moisture dried up, I most earnestly desire of you all this last duty of love, to pray for me and help me, with the ardency of your affection, when you perceive me, through the infirmity of my flesh, to languish and wax cold in my prayers. Hitherto I have taught you and many others, now the time is come wherein I may and desire to be taught and strengthened by every one of you.”

Having thus spoken, with something more to the like purpose, with much pain and interruption, he desired them to sing the 71st Psalm, which begins thus : “ In thee, O Lord, I put my trust, let me never be confounded ;” himself joining with them as well as his exhausted strength would permit. And when they recited those words, “ Thou art my hope, O Lord, my trust even from my youth,” he added, “ Thou only wast my whole hope :” and

as they went forward, saying, "Cast me not off in the time of age, forsake me not when my strength faileth me; yea, even to mine old age and grey head forsake me not, O God," he made this application to himself, "He is an old man, he is truly grey-headed, and his strength faileth him, who lieth on his death-bed." To which he added other short prayers, as if he were moved thereto by the power of God's Spirit, saying, "Lord, take from me my spirit. Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace: break off all delays: suffer thy servant to come unto Thee: command him to be with Thee; Lord, receive my spirit."

At this time, when one of those who stood by prayed with tears, that, if it might stand with God's pleasure, He would restore him to his former health, the pious Jewell overhearing him, turned his eyes, as if he were offended, and spoke to him those words of Ambrose, "'I have not lived so that I am ashamed to live longer, neither do I fear to die, because we have a merciful Lord.' A crown of righteousness is laid up for me. Christ is my righteousness. Father, let thy will be done: thy will I say, and not my will, which is imperfect and depraved. Lord, confound me not. This is my to-day," alluding probably to those words of Christ, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;" "this day let me quickly come to Thee. This day let me see the Lord Jesus!"

After a few fervent inward prayers of devotion, and sighs of longing desires, the soul returned to God that gave it. Mr. Ridley, the steward of his house, closed his eyes. Such was the death of Bishop Jewell, a most worthy trumpet of Christ's glorious Gospel⁴.

⁴ Life of Bp. Jewell, prefixed to Jewell's "Apology;" Garbrand, &c.

MEDITATION.—"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his^s."



ARCHBISHOP PARKER.

DIED 1575.

DR. MATTHEW PARKER was the second Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Thomas Cranmer having been the first. Dr. Parker was a man of great piety and learning. Foreseeing his approaching dissolution, he wrote to the lord treasurer, that he trusted that should be one of the last letters which he should write to him. "And it may be," said he, "whereas I have a great while provided for death, yet God will, peradventure, have me continue awhile, to exercise myself in these contemplations of grief."

His death was no surprise to him, for it employed very often his serious meditations. In his sermons he used frequently to exhort his auditory, that death should not find them unprovided. And being a man much loving order

^s Num. xxiii. 10.

and decency, he prescribed and set down in writing, after what method and order things should be conducted at his death and funeral. He appointed his tombstone to be of black marble, and to be fitted up before his death, that he might look upon it while he lived, and that it might be ready to be laid upon his corpse when he should be buried. His tomb, also, he procured to be made and erected while he was alive, the workmanship whereof was not exquisite, but plain. It was his mindfulness of his mortality and of the dreadful judgment that followed it, that made him choose that sentence of Scripture spoken by St. John, "*Mundus transit, et concupiscentia ejus,*" (The world passeth away, and the lust thereof,) which he had very often in his mouth, and wrote in his letters; had it engraven round his coat of arms, and described on the walls of his house, and on the glass of his windows; whereby, in the midst of his worldly greatness, he called to mind his own brittle, frail condition, and the vanity of his own most pompous state; that he might be reminded to direct his thoughts upon a more stable and lasting inheritance, to be possessed in another world. And to put him in mind of judgment as well as death, he had engraven on the seal of his See, the manner of the last judgment, where Christ sat gloriously and with majesty to judge the quick and the dead, uttering these words to his elect, "*Venite, benedicti,*" (Come, ye blessed,) and to the reprobate, "*Ite, maledicti*" (Depart, ye cursed). Here also the dead were represented rising out of their graves to receive their sentence: that by these remembrances he might quicken himself to do God's will, and discharge his high function; that he might have good hope against the time when

God should call him to give account of his stewardship.

This meditation of death and the day of judgment being deeply infixed in him, he had nothing else in his purposes or wishes. But whether this troublesome race of human life were lengthened or shortened to him, contented therewith, as it should please God, he did wholly commit himself to the protection of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; whose honour and glory hath no end, and is extended to all eternity⁶.

REFLECTION.—By thinking upon death our minds are frequently very much oppressed with darkness, because we remember only the night of the grave, forgetting the light of heaven at the morn of the resurrection.



REV. BERNARD GILPIN.

DIED 1583. AGED 65.

A CLERGYMAN, exemplary for his piety, useful labours, and great benevolence. On account of his

⁶ Strype's Life and Acts of Archbishop Parker, fol. 1711.

great piety and zeal, he was styled "the great apostle of the north."

When sensible that his end was approaching, he told his friends of his apprehensions, and spoke of his death with great composure. He was soon after this confined to his chamber, but retained his senses to the last. A few days before his death, he desired that his friends, acquaintance, and dependants, might be called into his chamber; and, being raised on his bed, addressed himself to them on matters of eternal concern. To his scholars, called in by his request, he said, "that this was their time, if they had any desire to qualify themselves for being of use in the world; that learning was well worth their attention, but virtue much more so." He also sent for several persons, who had hitherto made no good use of his advice, and upon whom he imagined his dying words might have a better effect; but his speech began to falter before he had finished his exhortations. The remaining hours of his life he spent in prayer and broken conversation with some select friends, mentioning often the consolations of the Gospel; declaring they were the only true ones, and that nothing else could bring a man peace at the last⁷.

REFLECTION.—When once the Christian has shaken off his fears of death, when he is able to look through a grave and see beyond, he discovers a glorious eternity opening itself more and more, and he thenceforward longs to dwell with Christ, and to join the spirits of just men made perfect.

⁷ Chalmers' and Gorton's Biog.



SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

DIED 1586. AGED 32.

THIS great man died of a wound in the thigh received from a bullet at the battle of Zutphen. "As he was retiring," says his biographer, "from the field of battle, pale, languid, and thirsty, with excess of bleeding, he asked for water to quench his thirst. The water was brought, and had no sooner approached his lips, than he instantly resigned it to a dying soldier, whose ghastly countenance attracted his notice, saying, 'This man's necessity is still greater than mine.'"

Sir Philip Sidney was an illustrious patriot and pious Christian. A soldier dying a Christian death, is a noble and animating spectacle. The military character is then really great, when it is exalted by the genuine virtues of a Christian. Sir Philip retained a calm and undisturbed spirit, and made a public confession of his faith to the holy ministers of religion who encircled his bed, to men eminent for their goodness and edifying piety. This confession is said to have been such as no book but the heart could truly and feelingly deliver.

They afterwards accompanied him, at his own earnest request, in a devout prayer dictated by himself and uttered with much energy and affection, the free and fervent effusion of a heart deeply penetrated with a true sense of sin. "His sins," he said, "were best known to himself, and out of that true sense he was more perfectly instructed to apply the eternal sacrifice of our Saviour's passion and merits to himself."

In the course of his illness he introduced a topic of conversation, the most serious and sublime that can engage the attention of man, the Immortality of the Soul. The day on which he died, he called for music to compose his disordered frame. His mind was soothed and tranquillized, anticipating, as it were, those delightful strains of celestial melody, with which the angelic choir encompass the throne of God. With a patient submission to the Divine will, he bade adieu to his most afflicted brother, in words which deserve to be engraven in letters of gold. "Love my memory; cherish my friends; their faithfulness to me may insure you that they are honest. But above all, govern your will and affection by the will and word of your Creator, in me beholding the end of this world with all its vanities." He died in the arms of his dear friend, Mr. William Temple^s.

REFLECTION.—If we thought seriously and practically on the immortality of the soul, our vain desires, worldly pleasures, and sinful courses would be checked, and our attention directed to that fixed state of being, in which an eternity of pain or happiness must be our portion for ever.

^s Zouch's Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Sir Philip Sidney.



WILLIAM CECIL, LORD BURGHLEY.

DIED 1598. AGED 77.

HE was secretary of state in the reign of King Edward VI., and lord high treasurer of England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

His resignation in his last illness was remarkable, in which, while he testified a most cheerful sense of the signal blessings he enjoyed in his life, he showed not only a satisfaction, but an earnest desire of dying. He comforted and instructed his children with much tenderness, but without betraying any weakness; he prayed fervently, and never showed any discomposure at the approach of death, but as he lived with the charity, so he died with the constancy of a Christian.

The following particulars are recorded by a faithful domestic:—

He had the favour of his prince, the love of his people, great offices, honours, livings, good children, and all blessings the world could afford him; yet, he contemned the world, and desired nothing but death, either because he had

lived long enough, and desired to be in heaven, or else because he could not live to do that good for his country he desired, or rather as it is most likely both: for he had seen and tasted so much of the sweet and the sour of the world, as made him weary to live, and knew so much of the joys of his salvation, wherein was his only comfort, as gave him cause to desire death, when it was God's good pleasure, as he often said, but how or whatsoever it was, the sign was infallibly good. He contemned this life, and expected the next; for there was no earthly thing wherein he took comfort, but in contemplation, reading, or hearing the Scriptures, Psalms, and Prayers.

About ten or twelve days before he died, he grew weak, and kept his bed, complaining only of a pain in his breast, which continued at intervals till within one night before his death. At six of the clock at night, the physicians finding no distemper in his pulse or body, but assuring his life, affirming it was impossible he should be heart-sick, that had so good temper, and such perfect pulse and senses; yet at seven of the clock following, he fell into a convulsion like to the shaking of an ague. Now, quoth he, the Lord be praised, the time is come; and calling his children, blessed them, and took his leave, commanding them to love and fear God, and love one another; he also prayed for the Queen, that she might live long, and die in peace. His last recorded words were, that "he was assured God had forgiven his sins, and would save his soul."

The last will and testament of this great and good man is worthy of all observation: the following is a transcript of the preamble:—

"Considering by the goodness of Almighty

God, I have been created a reasonable creature, and thereby ordained to serve Him; and born of Christian parents, and christened in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and consequently, brought up and instructed, in my younger years, in the knowledge of the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which was more clearly revealed in the times of my young years, than it had been many years before; being thereby taught that there was no other means for the salvation of the soul but by the death and resurrection of Christ the Son of God, wherein I do put my whole confidence and trust, and do desire the assistance of his Holy Spirit to have grace to be thankful for the same, and to have a desire to obey his will and commandments, as far forth as the infirmity of my flesh will suffer, in living religiously and virtuously; whereunto, adding the inevitable certainty of the death of my body, though I am uncertain of the time; and yet by the increase of time, and infirmities of my body necessarily induced to look shortly, by order of nature, for my worldly end; and that whatsoever worldly goods God hath given, or rather lent unto me, I do certainly know that, by death, I must leave them all to the world; and that whatsoever godly and spiritual graces and gifts have been, by God's special grace, bestowed on me, I hope, certainly, by God's goodness and mercy, though my body shall be committed to earth, yet to enjoy the fruits thereof in heaven, after this mortal life, if I shall use and dispose them in this life to God's glory, acknowledging them to have proceeded of his mere goodness, and that more plenteously than to many others. Upon all these and many like considerations, I being at this present time occupied with the cogitations of my

mortality, and yet of whole mind and memory (for which I humbly thank God), do determine⁹," &c. &c.

A promise from holy Scripture. "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces: and it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us ¹⁰."



RICHARD HOOKER.

DIED 1600. AGED about 47.

HE was a Clergyman eminent for humility, piety, and learning, and the celebrated author of the work called "Ecclesiastical Polity," wherein he judiciously set forth and defended the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England. About the year 1600 he fell into a long and sharp sickness, occasioned by a cold taken in his passage by water betwixt London and Gravesend, from the

⁹ Memoirs of the Life and Administration of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, by the Rev. Edward Nares, D.D., pp. 483. 489. 492.

¹⁰ Isaiah xxv. 8, 9.

malignity of which he was never recovered; for after that time till his death he was never free from thoughtful days and restless nights. But a submission to His will that makes the sick man's bed easy by giving rest to his soul, made his very languishment comfortable: and yet all this time he was solicitous in his study, and said often to Dr. Saravia, (who saw him daily, and was the chief comfort of his life,) "that he did not beg a long life of God for any other reason but to live to finish his three remaining books of Ecclesiastical Polity, and then, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace," which was his usual expression. And God heard his prayers, though he denied the Church the benefit of those books, as completed by himself; and it is thought he hastened his own death, by hastening to give life to his own books: but this is certain, that the nearer he was to his death, the more he grew in humility, in holy thoughts and resolutions.

About a month before his death, this good man, that never knew, or at least that never considered the pleasures of the palate, began first to lose his appetite, and then to have an averseness to all food, insomuch that he seemed to live some intermitted weeks by the smell of food only, and yet still studied and writ. And now his guardian angel seemed to foretell him that the day of his dissolution drew near, for which his vigorous soul appeared to thirst. In this time of his sickness, and not many days before his death, his house was robbed; of which he having notice, his question was, "Are my books and written papers safe?" and being answered "that they were," his reply was, "Then it matters not; for no other loss can trouble me."

About one day before his death, Dr. Saravia, who

knew the very secrets of his soul, came to him, and after a conference of the benefit, the necessity, and safety of the Church's absolution, it was resolved that the doctor should give him both that and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on the following day. To which end the doctor came, and after a short retirement and privacy, they two returned to the company; and then the doctor gave him and some of those friends which were with him, the blessed sacrament of the body and blood of Jesus. Which being performed, the doctor thought he saw a reverend gaiety and joy in his face. But it lasted not long; for his bodily infirmities did return suddenly, and became more visible, insomuch that the doctor apprehended death ready to seize him; yet after some amendment, left him at night, with a promise to return early the day following, which he did; and then found him better in appearance, deep in contemplation, and not inclinable to discourse, which gave the doctor occasion to require his present thoughts, to the which he replied, that "he was meditating the number and nature of angels, and their blessed obedience and order, without which peace could not be in heaven; and, oh, that it might be so on earth!"

After which words he said, "I have lived to see this world is made up of perturbations, and I have long been preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near. And though I have, by his grace, loved Him in my youth, and feared Him in my age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence to Him and to all men, yet if Thou, O Lord, be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it? and therefore, where I have failed, Lord, show

mercy unto me ; for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, for His merits who died to purchase pardon for penitent sinners ; and since I owe Thee a death, Lord, let it not be terrible, and then take thine own ; I submit to it. Let not mine, O Lord, but let thy will be done," with which expression he fell into a dangerous slumber,—dangerous as to his recovery. Yet recover he did, but it was to speak only these few words, " Good doctor, God hath heard my daily petitions ; for I am at peace with all men, and He is at peace with me ; and from that blessed assurance, I feel that inward joy which this world can neither give nor take from me : my conscience beareth me this witness, and this witness makes the thoughts of death joyful. I could wish to live to do the Church more service, but cannot hope for it ; for my days are past as a shadow that returns not."

More he would have spoken, but his spirits failed him, and after a short conflict betwixt nature and death, a quiet sigh put a period to his last breath, and so he fell asleep. And now he seems to rest like Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Let me here draw his curtain, till with the most glorious company of the patriarchs and apostles, and the most noble army of martyrs and confessors, this most learned, most humble, holy man, shall also awake to receive an eternal tranquillity, and with it a greater degree of glory than common Christians shall be made partakers of. In the mean time, bless, O Lord, bless his brethren the clergy of this nation, with effectual endeavours to attain, if not to his great learning, yet to his remarkable meekness, his godly simplicity, and his Christian moderation ; for these will bring peace at the last : and, Lord ! let his most excellent writings be

blest with what he designed when he undertook them, which was glory to Thee, O God on high, peace in thy Church, and good will to mankind ! Amen, Amen ¹.

The following are some of Richard Hooker's Precepts and Meditations concerning sickness and death, selected from his writings :—

1. Our good or evil estate after death dependeth most upon the quality of our lives. 2. Concerning the ways of death, the choice thereof is only in His hands who alone hath power over all flesh, and unto whose appointment we ought with patience meekly to submit ourselves. 3. Let us, which know what it is to die as Absalom, or Ananias and Sapphira, died, let us beg of God, that when the hour of our rest is come, the patterns of our dissolution may be Jacob, Moses, Joshua, and David. 4. Wisdom so far prevaieth with men as to make them content to endure the longer grief and bodily pain, that the soul may have time to call itself to a just account of all things past, by means whereof repentance is perfected, there is wherein to exercise patience, the joys of the kingdom of heaven have leisure to present themselves, the pleasures of sin and this world's vanities are censured with uncorrupt judgment, charity is free to make advised choice of the soil wherein her last seed may most fruitfully be bestowed, the mind is at liberty to have due regard of that disposition of worldly things which it can never afterwards alter; and because the nearer we draw unto God the more we are oftentimes enlightened with the shining beams of his

¹ Izaak Walton's *Life of Richard Hooker*, in Wordsworth's *Ecel. Biog.*

most glorious presence, as being then even almost in sight, a leisurable departure may in that case bring forth, for the good of such as are present, that which shall cause them for ever after, from the bottom of their hearts to pray, Oh, let us die the death of the righteous, and let our last end be like theirs !



JOHN REYNOLDS, D.D.

DIED 1607. AGED 57.

HE was president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and selected by King James, with other learned men of his time, to translate the Scriptures from the original Hebrew into the English language. Fuller, in his "Abel Redivivus," gives us the following interesting account of the part taken by Dr. Reynolds in this important work just before his decease.

"After the conference at Hampton Court, it pleased his majesty to set some learned men on work, to translate the Bible into the English tongue ; among others, Dr. Reynolds was thought upon, to whom, for his great skill in the original

languages, Dr. Smith, afterwards bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Harding, president of Magdalen, Dr. Kilbie, rector of Lincoln, Dr. Brett, and others, employed in that work by his majesty, had recourse once a week; and in his lodgings perfected their notes. In a great part of his sickness the meeting was held at his lodgings, and he lying on his pallet assisted them; and, in a manner, in the very translation of the Book of Life, was translated to a better life. All the time of his sickness, save when he conferred with the translators, was spent in prayer, and hearing partly treatises of devotion and partly books of controversy read to him.

“This course held till Ascension day, when his sickness growing sore upon him, he fell into a trance, of which when he was recovered he spake comfortably to us all there present, saying that he well hoped that he should have ascended that very day of our Lord’s ascension; but now, saith he, I shall stay a little longer with you, in which time I intreat you to read nothing to me, but such chapters of Holy Scripture as I shall appoint.

“Among others designed by him we read the first chapter of St. Paul to the Philippians, and stayed a little upon those words, ‘God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ; and this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that you may approve things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.’ And proceeding afterwards in that chapter to the twentieth verse: ‘As always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death; for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain; but if

I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour; yet what I shall choose I wot not, for I am in a straight between two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.' And as we were going further and reading the five and twentieth verse; 'having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you,' he bade us there stop and make an end, intimating thereby that unto us, which after a few days fell out to our great grief, that he was not to continue with us.

"In the presence of the vice-chancellor of the university, and other distinguished men of the university, he subscribed the following attestation:—'These are to testify to all the world, that I die in the profession of that faith which I have taught all my life, both in my preaching and in my writings, with an assured hope of my salvation, only by the merits of Christ my Saviour.'

"He died on the Thursday after Ascension day. The chapel of his college not being large enough to contain the numbers who thronged the funeral, a desk was set up and covered with mourning in the middle of the quadrangle, whence Daniel Featley, then fellow of the college, made an address on the history of Dr. Reynolds' life, and on the manner of his death*."

A PRAYER.—O blessed Lord, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comforts, we beseech Thee, look down in pity and compassion upon all Thy afflicted servants. O merciful God, who hast written Thy Holy Word for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of Thy Holy Scrip-

* Fuller's "Abel Redivivus," ed. 1651, p. 487, *et seq.*

tures might have hope, give us a right understanding of ourselves, and of Thy threats and promises, that we may neither cast away our confidence in Thee, nor place it any where but in Thee. Give us strength against all our temptations. Break not the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Shut not up Thy tender mercies in displeasure ; but make us to hear of joy and gladness, that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice. Deliver us from fear of the enemy, and lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and give us peace through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



PRINCE HENRY.

DIED 1612. AGED 18.

THE death of Henry, Prince of Wales, eldest son of King James the First, diffused universal grief throughout the nation. On the Sunday previous to his decease, it being the custom of his house to have the sermon early when the court was near, because he was accustomed after his own, to hear the king's preacher, when he was informed

that Mr. Robert Wilkinson, rector of St. Olave's, Southwark, one of his majesty's chaplains, was ready to preach before his highness, he, contrary to his late habit of being in bed, and though he then found himself drowsy and ill, arose, and began to dress himself; for he had a great esteem for Mr. Wilkinson as a preacher ever since he had heard long before a sermon of his upon the Last Judgment, which his highness afterwards spoke of with high approbation. He did not make the preacher wait long for him in the chapel, where the sermon was upon a very seasonable topic, Job xiv. 1, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble;" and in it were represented with proper force and extent the miseries peculiarly attending the highest stations in life. The prince having commended this sermon, went to Whitehall, where he heard another with the king. After this he dined with his majesty, and ate with a seemingly good appetite, but the paleness of his countenance, and the hollow ghastliness of his eyes, were much remarked.

Nov. 4th.—Dr. Mayerne, the physician, had before this seriously exhorted the prince to commend himself into the hands of God, and found him in a most excellent and religious frame of mind; and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. George Abbot, hearing of the desperate state of his highness, now thought it his duty to visit him. His first question to the prince was, whether there had been any prayers said in his chamber since his sickness? to which his highness answered in the negative, alleging the cause to have been the continual employment of the physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries about him, and that he had not been put in mind of it till then; but that he had not failed to pray

quietly by himself. The answer being very satisfactory to the archbishop, he again asked, whether his highness would now henceforward be pleased to have prayers in the chamber? The prince readily consented to this, inquiring which of his chaplains was present, and finding Dr. Milbourne, Dean of Rochester, to be attending, he ordered him to be called, as one whom he had always esteemed for his learning, character, and abilities as a preacher.

The archbishop in the mean time, not willing too much to disquiet the prince, said prayers that evening at his bed-side in a low voice, upon which his highness desired him to raise it, and repeated the confession of his faith, word for word, after his grace. Next morning, the archbishop came in great haste to his highness, and gently asking him how he did since he last saw him, and finding little or no hope remaining, he began to prepare the prince against the fear of death. He observed, that "the preparation for death, and the thinking and meditating upon it, could not bring on the awful event the sooner, but, on the contrary, would fortify him so much the more against it." He reminded him of the excellence and immortality of the soul, the inexpressible happiness of good men in another state, the misery of the present, and the insignificance of all the vain, inconstant, momentary, and frail pleasures of it in comparison of the joys of heaven, with many other topics of a like nature.

The archbishop having thus prepared him to hear, went further, and acquainted him of the exceeding great danger which he was in, and that, though he might recover, as he hoped he would, yet he might also die. And since it was an irrevocable and inevitable necessity, that all must once

die, sooner or later, death being the reward of sin, his grace asked, if it should so fall out, whether or no he was well pleased to submit himself to the will of God? To which the prince answered, "with all his heart." The archbishop then proceeded to questions concerning his faith, first of the religion and Church wherein he lived, which his highness acknowledged to be the only true Church; then of his faith in Christ only, by whom, and in whom, without any merit of his, he could be assured of the remission of all his sins. This the prince professed to be his sincere belief. Lastly, of the resurrection of the body, everlasting life, and the happiness of heaven; all which the prince confessed, hoping to enjoy it with all the saints. After this conference, with much more to the same purpose, the archbishop, fearing too much to disquiet the prince, took his leave of him with many pious exhortations.

On Friday morning, after some medicine, he had a little rest; but this was of short continuance, for he soon relapsed; his sight and senses failed; his hearing became difficult; and all the signs of approaching death appeared. In this exigence the Archbishop of Canterbury being present, saw that it was now the critical moment of administering some consolation to the prince, if he yet had any remains of consciousness; and coming to him, put him in mind of all those things which he had said to him the day before, calling on him aloud, in his ear, to remember Jesus Christ; to believe, hope, and trust in Him, with assured hope of mercy; to lift up his heart, and prepare himself to meet the Lord Jesus, with many other such exhortations. He then spoke more loud than ever in his ear: "Sir, hear you me? hear you me? hear you me? If you hear

me, in certain sign of your faith, and hope in the blessed resurrection, give us for our comfort a sign, by lifting up of your hands." This the prince did, lifting up both his hands together. The archbishop then desired him to give still another sign, by lifting up his eyes, which the prince having done, they let him alone. The archbishop likewise, with a flood of tears, poured out by his highness' bed-side a most pathetic prayer. During the whole time, from three in the morning till night, there was continual prayer in the house, and in every place where the prince's danger was known. His highness at last, a few minutes before eight at night, on Friday, the 6th of November, 1612, at the age of eighteen years, eight months, and seventeen days, expired; having supported his long illness with a calmness and composure seldom seen³.

REFLECTION.—Some die in infancy, some in youth, these in manhood and those in the ripeness of old age; but blessed is he whom, when his Master cometh, He shall find watching.

³ Life of Henry, Prince of Wales, eldest son of King James the First. By Thos. Birch, D.D.



ROBERT ABBOT, BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

DIED 1617. AGED about 57.

DR. ROBERT ABBOT filled the see of Salisbury only two years and three months. When preaching on St. John xiv. 16, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever," many of his hearers presaged his departure from them. This indeed proved his last and farewell sermon, for soon after he came out of the pulpit, he was seized with most dreadful fits, from a disorder which was brought on by a sedentary life and close application to study. But in all these bodily tortures his soul was at ease; for the assurance of heavenly things caused him most cheerfully to part with earthly; and the quick sense he had of the "powers of the life to come," deadened the sense of his bodily pains. There were many came to visit him on his death-bed, and among others the judges, being then at Sarum in their circuit. To them he spared not his Christian admonitions; and when he discoursed before them, he insisted very much upon the benefit of a good conscience, rendering many thanks to his Creator for the great comforts he felt

thereby now in his extremity. He also admonished all who heard him, so to carry themselves in their most private and secret actions, as well as in their public, in order to obtain that at the last, which would stand them in more stead, than what all the world could afford them besides.

Having, when death approached, summoned his domestics, and with broken speeches in the language of a dying man, beginning to make a profession of his faith, his friends persuaded him to refrain, as his principles were manifest in his writings. He yielded to their advice, and signed all his works with these words: "That faith which I have defended in my writings is the truth of God, and in the avouching thereof I leave the world." Thus with exhortations, benedictions, and the pains of his disease, he became quite worn out, and lay, as it were, slumbering, with now and then a short ejaculation. At length, with eyes and hands uplifted for the space of two or three hours, he departed this life. His last words were, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; finish in me the work that Thou hast begun: into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit; for Thou hast redeemed me. O God of truth, save me, thy servant, who hopes and confides in Thee alone. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be shown unto me: in Thee have I trusted. O Lord, let me not be confounded for ever⁴."

AN ARGUMENT FOR PATIENCE.—Lord Clarendon in his "Tracts" thus reasons. "If we could give no other argument for Christian patience, it should be enough that never any man found ease, benefit, or relief by impatience, but increases

⁴ Fuller's "Abel Redivivus;" Life and Death of Robert Abbot, 1651.

and extends, and multiplies the agony, and pain, and misery of whatever calamity he undergoes by it. Whereas patience lessens and softens the burthen, and by degrees raises the constitution and strength to that pitch, that it is hardly sensible of it."



SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

DIED 1618. AGED 66.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH was a celebrated writer on subjects of history, politics, geography, and philosophy, but, above all, he was a pious Christian.

Few have acted so difficult a part in the last scene of life, with the spirit and firmness which Raleigh displayed in it. Just before his death he is supposed to have written a little poem or ode, of which the following is an extract, being the first and last verses of it.

" MY PILGRIMAGE."

"Give me my scallop shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation.

“Then am I ready, like a palmer fit,
To tread those blest paths which before I writ.
Of death and judgment, heaven and hell,
Who oft doth think, must needs die well.”

When Dr. Robert Townson, Dean of Westminster, who was commanded to be with Raleigh, sought to probe into his soul, and to discover whether that which the condemned man described as religious confidence, might not be the effect of presumption or of vain-glory, he was assured by Raleigh of his conviction, that “no man that knew God and feared Him could die with cheerfulness and courage, except he were assured of the love and favour of God towards him.” It is affirmed, that before he suffered, he ate his breakfast heartily, and made no more of his death than as if he had been to take his journey^s.

REFLECTION.—He has not spent his life ill who has learnt to die well; and he has lost his whole time, who knows not well how to end it.

THEOPHILUS AYLMER, D.D.

DIED 1625.

HE was Archdeacon of London, Rector of Much-Hadham, Herts, and second son of Dr. John Aylmer, Bishop of London. His preparation for death, and his behaviour of himself in his sickness, were remarkable, and truly Christian. His first work was to put his house in order, and to make his will; and then he raised up his mind to frequent, holy, and heavenly thoughts, quickening himself

^s Cayley, Townson, Thompson.

by these words, "the nearer to death, the happier ; the nearer to heaven, the farther from earth." He enjoined one of his nearest and dearest friends, that when he should perceive him at the point of death, he should prompt him to say these words, "Lord, have mercy upon me ; Lord Jesus, receive my soul ;" which his friend, when he perceived his death approaching, accordingly did. And though he could not speak the words, yet by the lifting up his hand, he signified the repeating of them in his heart.

In the beginning of his sickness, his friends persuaded him to take medicine ; he answered, "he needed it not, he should do well." "However," said he, "I commit and submit my body unto them, as unto God's instruments ; yet with this caution, that they deal plainly with me, and when they find their art ineffectual, then they render my poor carcase to me again, to be ordered according to my own direction." When he was asked afterwards how he did, he would say, "I thank God, heart whole ;" and once having laid one hand on his heart, and lifting up the other to heaven, he said, "The glory above giveth no room to sickness." When he found that he approached nearer to death, he made, according to the order of the Church, his confession to the preacher, his assistant, and received his absolution, and desired the communion ; but death came too hastily and prevented. When the preacher praying with him came to the suffrage, "Let the enemy have no power against him," he suddenly interposed with an observed courage, "I am assured he shall not."

He showed his paternal and conjugal love by these expressions : "Let none," saith he, "think

that I have left my children poor ; no, I have left them heavenly riches." And when his wife wept by him, he, observing her, said, " Why how now, sweetheart ; dost thou by those tears wound thine own heart and mine ? but mine is passion proof. Worldly occasions have many nights separated us ; and the morning hath rejoined us. 'Tis but one night, one short night, and I shall be from thee ; when this glorious morning, by that never-setting sun of glory, shall eternally bring us together." Like a good father, he showed a great concern for the well-being of his flock after he should be dead and gone. " As St. Paul said, he prayed for his brethren according to the flesh, that all Israel might be saved, so do I pray for my flock, that all my people may be saved ; and to this end I earnestly entreat the Lord, that after my departure He will send faithful and painful pastors among them, who may break the bread of life sincerely unto them, and in all godliness go in and out before them."

When his death came with nearer approaches towards him, he showed greater acts of faith and fearlessness of it. He declared he forgave all men, as he desired God should forgive him. " Let my people know," added he, " that their pastor died undaunted, and not afraid of death. I bless my God that I have no fear, no doubt, no reluctance, but an assured confidence in the sin-overcoming merits of Jesus Christ." And in the conclusion of all, he shut his own eyes with his own hands, dying in the Lord Jesus. He was buried in his own parish church, and honoured with a funeral sermon, preached by Dr. James Usher, the most learned Bishop of Armagh ⁶.

⁶ Strype's Life of Bishop Aylmer.

REFLECTION.—Why should we fear death, when it is written in the word of eternal truth, that neither life nor death shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus?

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**BISHOP ANDREWS.**

**DIED 1626. AGED 71.**

**LANCELOT ANDREWS** was Bishop of Winchester. By his learning and devotion the Church of Christ was much blessed.

Having faithfully served his generation, let us now see him dying. He was not often ill, and but once (till his last sickness) in thirty years before the time he died, which was at Downham, in the Isle of Ely, the air of that place not agreeing with the constitution of his body. But there he seemed to be prepared for his dissolution, saying oftentimes in the sickness, "It must come once, and why not here?" and at other times, before and since, he would say, "The days must come, when, whether we will or nill, we shall say with the preacher, 'I have no pleasure in

them<sup>7</sup>.” Of his death he himself seemed to presage a year before he died, and therefore prepared his oil, that he might be admitted in due time to the bride chamber. That of *qualis vita*, &c. was truly verified in him; for as he lived, so died he. As his fidelity in his health was great, so increased the strength of his faith in his sickness. His gratitude to man was now changed into his thankfulness to God: his affability to incessant and devout prayer and speech with his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier: his laborious studies to his restless groans, sighs, cries, and tears, his hands labouring, his eyes lifted up, and his heart beating and panting to see the living God, even to the last of his breath.

Of this reverend prelate, I may say, his was a life of prayer: a great part of five hours every day he spent in prayer and devotion to God. After the death of his brother, Thomas Andrews, whom he loved dearly, he began to reckon of his own, which he said would be in the end of summer or the beginning of winter. And when his brother, Nicholas Andrews, died, he took that as a certain warning of his own death; and from that time till the hour of his dissolution he spent all his time in prayer. In his last sickness he continued when awake to pray audibly, till his strength failed, and then, by lifting up his eyes and hands, showed that he still prayed; and then, when both voice, and eyes, and hands failed in their office, his countenance showed that he still prayed and praised God in his heart, till it pleased God to receive his blessed soul to Himself<sup>8</sup>. It is said that after his death, his manuscript prayers were

<sup>7</sup> Eccles. xii. 1.

<sup>8</sup> An Exact Narrative of the Life and Death of Bp. Andrews, 1650; reprinted 1817, &c.

found so soiled by usage, and so stained with tears, that they were scarcely readable.

**REFLECTION.**—There are few things relating to death which so evidently manifest the Divine care for our souls, as the many solemn warnings which God gives us by the successive removal of relations, friends, and neighbours. For every death of which we hear, preaches a most forcible sermon, from the text, “Be ye also ready.”

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JOHN DONNE, D.D.

DIED 1631. AGED 58.

**DR. DONNE** was Dean of St. Paul's. Not long before his death he caused to be drawn a figure of the body of Christ extended upon an anchor, in a similar manner to the representations of Christ on the cross: the only variation was in affixing Him to the cross of an *anchor*, the emblem of hope. He had caused this design to be executed in miniature, and also engraven upon very small Heliotropean stones, which were set in gold; and of these he sent many to his dearest friends, to be



used as seals or rings, and kept as memorials of him and of his affection to them. Dr. Donne afterwards used this symbol for his crest, instead of a sheaf of snakes, which was that of his family.

Before the end of the month of January, 1630, he was appointed to preach upon his old constant day, the first Friday in Lent: he had notice of it, and had in his sickness so prepared for that employment, that as he had long thirsted for it, so he resolved his weakness should not hinder his journey: he came, therefore, to London, some few days before his appointed day of preaching. At his coming thither, many of his friends (who with sorrow saw that his sickness had left him but so much flesh as did only cover his bones) doubted his strength to perform that task, and did therefore dissuade him from undertaking it, assuring him, however, it was like to shorten his life; but he denied their requests, saying, "he would not doubt that God, who in so many weaknesses had assisted him with unexpected strength, would now withdraw it in his last employment, professing an holy ambition to perform that sacred work." And when to the amazement of some beholders he appeared in the pulpit, many of them thought he presented himself, not to preach mortification by a living voice, but mortality by a decayed body and a dying face; and doubtless many did ask the question in Ezekiel, Do these bones live, or can that soul organize that tongue, to speak so long time as the sand in that glass will move towards its centre, and measure out an hour of this dying man's unspent life? Doubtless it cannot; and yet after some faint pauses in his zealous prayer, his strong desires enabled his weak body to discharge his memory of his preconceived

meditations, which were of dying, the text being, "To God the Lord belong the issues from death;" many that then saw his tears, and heard his faint hollow voice, professing that they thought the text prophetically chosen, and that Dr. Donne had preached his own funeral sermon.

Being full of joy that God had enabled him to perform this desired duty, he hastened to his house, out of which he never moved, till, like Stephen, he was carried by devout men to his grave. The next day after his sermon, his strength being much wasted and his spirits so spent, as indisposed him to business or to talk, a friend that had often been a witness of his free facetious discourse, asked him, "Why are you sad?" to whom he replied, with a countenance so full of cheerful gravity, as gave testimony of an inward tranquillity of mind, and of a soul willing to take a farewell of this world, and said, "I am not sad; but most of the night past I have entertained myself with many thoughts of several friends who have left me here, and are gone to that place from which they shall not return, and that within a few days I shall also go hence, and be no more seen: and my preparation for this change is become my nightly meditation upon my bed, which my infirmities have now made restless to me. But at this present time I was in a serious contemplation of the providence and goodness of God to me; to me who am less than the least of his mercies; and looking back upon my life past, I now plainly see that it was his hand that prevented me from all temporal employment, and that it was his will that I should never settle nor thrive till I entered into the ministry, in which I have lived almost twenty years, (I hope to his glory,) and by which, I most humbly thank Him, I have been enabled to requite most of those

friends which showed me kindness when my fortune was very low, as God knows it was; and as it has occasioned the expression of my gratitude. I have lived to be useful and comfortable to my good father-in-law Sir George Moore, whose patience God hath been pleased to exercise with many temporal crosses. I have maintained my own mother, whom it hath pleased God, after a plentiful fortune in her younger days, to bring to a great decay in her very old age. I have quieted the consciences of many that have groaned under the burthen of a wounded spirit, whose prayers I hope are available for me. I cannot plead innocence of life, especially of my youth; but I am to be judged by a merciful God, who is not willing to see what I have done amiss: and though of myself I have nothing to present to Him but sin and misery, yet I know He looks not upon me now as I am of myself, but as I am in my Saviour, and hath given me even at this present time some testimonies by his Holy Spirit, that I am of the number of his elect. I am therefore full of inexpressible joy, and shall die in peace."

Dr. Donne at this time had a monument made for him. This monument being resolved upon, Dr. Donne sent for a carver to make for him in wood the figure of an urn, giving him directions for the compass and height of it, and to bring with it a board of the just height of his body. These being got, then, without delay, a choice painter was got to be in readiness to draw his picture, which was taken as followeth. Several charcoal fires being first made in his large study, he brought with him into that place his winding sheet in his hand, and having put off all his clothes, had this sheet put on him and so tied with knots at his head and feet, and his hands so placed as

dead bodies are usually fitted to be shrouded and put into their coffin or grave. Upon this urn he thus stood with his eyes shut, and with so much of the sheet turned aside as might show his lean, pale, and death-like face, which was purposely turned towards the east, from whence he expected the coming of his and our Saviour Jesus Christ. In this posture he was drawn at his just height; and when the picture was fully finished, he caused it to be set by his bedside, where it continued till his death.

Chalmers tells us that this picture was then given to Dr. Henry King, the chief residentiary of St. Paul's, who caused him to be thus carved in white marble of one entire piece as it stood in that church. This figure may yet be seen in the vaults of St. Faith under St. Paul's. It stands erect in a window, without its niche, and deprived of the urn in which its feet were placed.

Upon the Monday after the drawing of this picture, he took his leave of his beloved study; and being sensible of his hourly decay, retired himself to his bedchamber, and that week sent at several times for many of his most considerable friends, with whom he took a solemn and deliberate farewell, commending to their considerations some sentences useful for the regulation of their lives, and then dismissed them, as good Jacob did his sons, with a spiritual benediction. The Sunday following he appointed his servants, that if there were any business yet undone that concerned him or themselves, it should be prepared against Saturday next; for after that day he would not mix his thoughts with anything that concerned this world; nor ever did: but as Job, so he waited for the appointed day of his dissolution. And now he was so happy as to have nothing to do but

to die, to do which he stood in need of no longer time; for he had studied it long, and to so happy a perfection, that in a former sickness he called God to witness, "He was that minute ready to deliver his soul into his hands, if that minute God would determine his dissolution." In that sickness he begged of God the constancy to be preserved in that state for ever; and his patient expectation to have his immortal soul disrobed of her garment of mortality, makes me confident he now had a modest assurance that his prayers were then heard, and his petition granted. He lay fifteen days earnestly expecting his hourly change; and in the last hour of his last day, as his body melted away and vapoured into spirit, his soul having, I verily believe, some revelation of the beatifical vision, he said, "I were miserable if I might not die;" and after these words closed many periods of his faint breath by saying often, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." His speech, which had long been his ready and faithful servant, left him not till the last moment of his life, and then forsook him not to serve another master, (for who speaks like him,) but died before him; for that it was then become useless to him that now conversed with God on earth, as angels are said to do in heaven, only by thoughts and looks. Being speechless, and seeing heaven by that illumination by which he saw it, he did, as St. Stephen, look stedfastly into it, till he saw the Son of man standing at the right hand of God his Father; and being satisfied with this blessed sight, as his soul ascended and his last breath departed from him, he closed his own eyes, and then disposed his own hands and body into such a posture as required not the least alteration by those who came to shroud him. Thus virtuous was the life, thus

excellent, thus exemplary was the death, of this memorable man<sup>9</sup>."

**REFLECTION.**—Though every child of Adam must use the words of holy Job, xvii. 13, 14, "The grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness, I have said to corruption, Thou art my father, to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister," yet most consolatory and exalting is the declaration of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 54, that "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality;" and that "then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."



REV. GEORGE HERBERT.

DIED 1632.

HE was rector of Bemerton, near Salisbury, author of "The Temple," &c., and a Divine eminent for his ardent devotion.

About a month before his death, his friend, Mr.

<sup>9</sup> Life of Dr. John Donne, by Izaak Walton, in Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog., vol. iii. p. 668, *et seq.*

to die, to do which he stood in  
time; for he had studied it long,  
a perfection, that in a former sight  
God to witness, "He was that  
deliver his soul into his hands, if it  
would determine his dissolution."  
he begged of God the constancy  
in that state for ever; and his patience  
to have his immortal soul disrobed  
of mortality, makes me confident  
a modest assurance that his prayer  
heard, and his petition granted.  
days earnestly expecting his hourly  
in the last hour of his last day, as he  
away and vapoured into spirit, his  
verily believe, some revelation of  
vision, he said, "I were miserable if  
die;" and after these words closed  
of his faint breath by saying often, "  
come, thy will be done." His service  
long been his ready and faithful servant  
not till the last moment of his life, and  
him not to serve another master, (for  
like him,) but died before him; for  
then become useless to him that he  
with God on earth, as angels are  
heaven, only by thoughts and love  
speechless, and seeing heaven by that  
by which he saw it, he did, as St. Paul  
steadfastly into it, till he saw the  
standing at the right hand of God  
and being satisfied, his  
soul ascended  
him, he closed  
own  
quiescent





Farrer<sup>10</sup>, hearing of Mr. Herbert's sickness, sent the Rev. Edward Duncon, Rector of Friern Barnet, to see him. An interesting account is given by Izaak Walton of this meeting, at which Mr. Duncon prayed with him. The next morning Mr. Duncon left him, and took a journey to Bath, but with a promise to return back to him within five days.

According to his promise, he returned the fifth day, and then found Mr. Herbert much weaker than he left him, and therefore their discourse could not be long; but at Mr. Duncon's parting with him, Mr. Herbert spoke to this purpose; "Sir, I pray, give my brother Farrer an account of the decaying condition of my body, and tell him I beg him to continue his daily prayers for me; and let him know that I have considered that God only is what He would be, and that I am by his grace become so like Him as to be pleased with what pleaseth Him; and tell him that I do not repine but am pleased with my want of health; and tell him my heart is fixed on that place where true joy is only to be found; and that I long to be there, and do wait for my appointed change with hope and patience." Having said this, he did, with so sweet a humility as seemed to exalt him, bow down to Mr. Duncon, and with a thoughtful and contented look say to him, "Sir, I pray, deliver this little book to my dear brother Farrer, and tell him he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed between God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master, in whose service I have now found perfect freedom: desire him to read it; and

<sup>10</sup> This Mr. Farrer is the Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, the memorial of whom, by Dr. Peckard, succeeds the present narrative.

then if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul, let it be made public; if not, let him burn it; for I and it are less than the least of God's mercies."

Thus meanly did this humble man think of this excellent book, which now bears the name of "The Temple, or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations," of which Mr. Farrer would say, "There was in it the picture of a divine soul in every page; and that the whole book was such a harmony of holy passions as would enrich the world with pleasure and piety." And it appears to have done so; for there have been more than 20,000 copies of them sold since the first impression. At the time of Mr. Duncon's leaving Mr. Herbert, (which was about three months before his death,) his old and dear friend Mr. Woodnot came from London to Bemerton, and never left him till he had seen him draw his last breath, and closed his eyes on his deathbed. In this time of his decay he was often visited and prayed for by all the clergy that lived near him, especially by his friends the Bishop and prebendaries of the cathedral church in Salisbury, but by none more devoutly than his wife, his three nieces, (then a part of his family,) and Mr. Woodnot, who were the sad witnesses of his daily decay, to whom he would often speak to this purpose: "I now look back upon the pleasures of my life past, and see that the content I have taken in beauty, in wit, in music, and in pleasant conversation, are now all past by me like a dream, or as a shadow that returns not, and are now all become dead to me, or I to them; and I see that as my father and generation hath done before me, so I also shall now suddenly, with Job, make my bed also in the dark: and I praise God I am prepared for it; and I praise him that I am not

to learn patience now I stand in such need of it, and that I have practised mortification, and endeavoured to die daily, that I might not die eternally; and my hope is, that I shall shortly leave this valley of tears, and be free from all fevers and pain, and, which will be a more happy condition, I shall be free from sin, and all the temptations and anxieties that attend it: and this being past, I shall dwell in the new Jerusalem, dwell there with men made perfect, dwell where these eyes shall see my Master and Saviour Jesus, and with Him see my dear mother, and all my relations and friends. But I must die, or not come to that happy place: and this is my content, that I am going daily towards it, and that every day which I have lived hath taken a part of my appointed time from me, and that I shall live the less time for having lived this and the day past." These and the like expressions, which he uttered often, may be said to be his enjoyment of heaven before he enjoyed it. The Sunday before his death he rose suddenly from his bed or couch, called for one of his instruments, took it into his hand, and said,

My God, my God !  
My music shall find thee,  
And every string  
Shall have his attribute to sing.

And having tuned it, he played, and sung,

The Sundays of man's life,  
Threaded together on time's string,  
Make bracelets, to adorn the wife  
Of the eternal glorious King :  
On Sundays, heaven's door stands ope ;  
Blessings are plentiful and rife,  
More plentiful than hope.

Thus he sang on earth such hymns and anthems as the angels, and he and Mr. Farrer, now sing

in heaven. Thus he continued meditating, and praying, and rejoicing, till the day of his death; and on that day he said to Mr. Woodnot, "My dear friend, I am sorry I have nothing to present to my merciful God but sin and misery: but the first is pardoned, and a few hours will now put a period to the latter; for I shall suddenly go hence, and be no more seen;" upon which expression Mr. Woodnot took occasion to remember him of the re-edifying (rebuilding) Layton church, and his many acts of mercy, to which he made answer, saying, "They be good works if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and not otherwise."

After this discourse he became more restless, and his soul seemed to be weary of her earthly tabernacle: and this uneasiness became so visible, that his wife, his three nieces, and Mr. Woodnot, stood constantly about his bed, beholding him with sorrow, and an unwillingness to lose the sight of him whom they could not hope to see much longer. As they stood thus beholding him, his wife observed him to breathe faintly, and with much trouble, and observed him to fall into a sudden agony, which so surprised her, that she fell into a sudden emotion, and required of him to know "how he did?" to which his answer was, "that he had passed a conflict with his last enemy, and had overcome him by the merits of his Master Jesus;" after which answer he looked up, and saw his wife and nieces weeping to an extremity, and charged them, "If they loved him, to withdraw into the next room, and there pray every one alone for him; for nothing but their lamentations could make his death uncomfortable," to which request their sighs and tears would not suffer them to make any reply; but they yielded

him sad obedience, leaving only with him Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock.

Immediately after they had left him, he said to Mr. Bostock, "Pray, sir, open that door; then look into that cabinet, in which you may easily find my last will; and give it into my hand," which being done, Mr. Herbert delivered it into the hand of Mr. Woodnot, and said, "My old friend, I here deliver you my last will, in which you will find that I have made you my sole executor, for the good of my wife and nieces; and I desire you to show kindness to them as they shall need it. I do not desire you to be just; for I know you will be so for your own sake: but I charge you, by the religion of our friendship, to be careful of them." And having obtained Mr. Woodnot's promise to be so, he said, "I am now ready to die:" after which words he said, "Lord, forsake me not now my strength faileth me, but grant me mercy for the merits of my Jesus; and now, Lord, Lord, receive my soul." And with those words he breathed forth his divine soul, without any apparent disturbance; Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock attending his last breath, and closing his eyes.

Thus he lived, and thus he died, like a saint, unspotted of the world, full of alms-deeds, full of humility, and all the examples of a virtuous life; which I cannot conclude better than with this borrowed observation:

"—— All must to their cold graves;  
But the religious actions of the just  
Smell sweet in death, and blossom in the dust."

Mr. George Herbert's have done so to this, and will doubtless do so to succeeding generations.

*Part of a Letter written by Mr. George Herbert,  
to comfort his Mother, in her Sickness.*

Madam,—I beseech you to be cheerful, and comfort yourself in the God of all comfort, who is not willing to behold any sorrow, but for sin.—What hath affliction in it, more than for a moment? or why should our afflictions here have so much power or boldness as to oppose the hope of our joys hereafter? Madam, as the earth is but a point in respect of the heavens, so are earthly troubles compared to heavenly joys: therefore, if either age or sickness lead you to those joys, consider what advantage you have over youth and health, who are now so near those true comforts. I have always observed the thread of life to be like other threads or skeins of silk, full of snarls and encumbrances. For myself, dear mother, I always feared sickness more than death, because sickness hath made me unable to perform those offices for which I came into the world, and must yet be kept in it; but you are freed from that fear, who have already abundantly discharged that part, having both ordered your family, and so brought up your children, that they have attained to the years of discretion and competent maintenance, so that now, if they do not well, the fault cannot be charged on you, whose example and care of them will justify you both to the world and your own conscience; insomuch that, whether you turn your thoughts on the life past, or on the joys that are to come, you have strong preservatives against all disquiet. And for temporal afflictions, I beseech you consider, all that can happen to you are either afflictions of estate, or body, or mind. For those of estate, of what poor

regard ought they to be! Since, if we had riches, we are commanded to give them away: so that the best use of them is, having, not to have them.

But, perhaps, our credit and estimation being above the common people, calls on us to live in a more splendid fashion; but, O God! how easily is that answered, when we consider that the blessings in the Holy Scripture are never given to the rich, but to the poor. I never find blessed be the rich, or blessed be the noble; but "blessed be the meek, and blessed be the poor, and blessed be the mourners, for they shall be comforted."—And yet, O God! most carry themselves so, as if they not only not desired, but even feared to be blessed. And for afflictions of the body, dear madam, remember the holy martyrs of God, how they have been burnt by thousands, and have endured such other tortures as the very mention of them might beget amazement; but their fiery trials have had an end; and yours (which, praised be God, are less) are not like to continue long. I beseech you, let such thoughts as these moderate your present fear and sorrow; and know, that if any of yours should prove a Goliath-like trouble, yet you may say with David, "That God, who hath delivered me out of the paws of the lion and bear, will also deliver me out of the hands of this uncircumcised Philistine." Lastly, for those afflictions of the soul; consider that God intends that to be as a sacred temple for Himself to dwell in, and will not allow any room there for such an inmate as grief, or allow that any sadness shall be His competitor. And above all, if any care of future things molest you, remember those admirable words of the Psalmist, "Cast thy care on the Lord, and He shall nourish thee," Ps. lv.; to

which join that of St. Peter, "Casting all your care on the Lord, for He careth for you," 1 Pet. v. 7. What an admirable thing is this, that God puts His shoulder to our burden, and entertains our care for us, that we may the more quietly intend His service!

To conclude, let me commend only one place more to you: Phil. iv. 4. St. Paul saith there, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." He doubles it, to take away the scruple of those that might say, "What, shall we rejoice always in afflictions?" "Yes, I say again, Rejoice." So that it is not left to us to rejoice or not rejoice; but, whatsoever befalls us, we must always, at all times, rejoice in the Lord, who taketh care for us. And it follows in the next verses, "Let your moderation appear to all men: the Lord is at hand: be careful for nothing." What can be said more comfortably? Trouble not yourselves; God is at hand, to deliver us from all, or in all. Dear madam, pardon my boldness, and accept the good meaning of your most obedient son,

GEORGE HERBERT<sup>1</sup>.

*Trin. Col. May 25, 1622.*

REFLECTION FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.  
—"Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 57.

<sup>1</sup> Izaak Walton's Life of G. Herbert, in Wordsworth's Eecl. Biog.





REV. NICHOLAS FERRAR.

DIED 1637. AGED 47.

WE are told in the memoir of this remarkable man, that about three months before his death, perceiving in himself some inward faintness, and apprehending that his last hour was now drawing very near, he broke off abruptly from writing any further upon a subject which was then under consideration, and began to write down "Contemplations on Death," in the following words:—

"The remembrance of death is very powerful to restrain us from sinning. For he who shall well consider that the day will come (and he knoweth not how soon) when he shall be laid on a sick bed, weak and faint, without ease, and almost without strength, encompassed with melancholy thoughts, and overwhelmed with anguish: when on one side, his distemper increasing upon him, the physician tells him that he is past all hope of life, and on the other, his friends urge him to dispose of his worldly goods, and share his wealth among them—that wealth which he procured with trouble and preserved with anxiety—that wealth which he now

parts from with sorrow: when again the Priest calls on him to take the preparatory measures for his departure; when he himself now begins to be assured that here he hath no abiding city; that this is no longer a world for him; that no more suns will rise and set upon him; that for him there will be no more seeing, no more hearing, no more speaking, no more touching, no more tasting, no more fancying, no more understanding, no more remembering, no more desiring, no more living, no more delights of this sort to be enjoyed by him; but that death will at one stroke deprive him of all these things; that he will speedily be carried out of the house which he had called his own, and is now become another's; that he will be put into a cold narrow grave; that earth will be consigned to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust: let any man duly and daily ponder these things, and how can it be that he should dare—"Here the strength of this good man failed him.

The third day before his death, he summoned all his family round him, and then desired his brother to go and mark out a place for his grave, according to the particular directions he then gave. When his brother returned, saying it was done as he desired, he requested them all, in the presence of each other, to take out of his study three large hampers full of books, which had been there locked up many years; and said, "They are comedies, tragedies, heroic poems, and romances. Let them be immediately burnt upon the place marked out for my grave, and when you shall have so done, come back and inform me." When information was brought him, that they were all consumed, he desired that this act might be considered as the testimony of his disapprobation of all such productions, as tending to corrupt the mind of man,

and improper for the perusal of every good and sincere Christian. On the 1st of December, 1637, he found himself declining very fast, and desired to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; after which, and taking a most affectionate farewell of all his family, without a struggle or a groan, he expired in a rapturous ecstasy of devotion. Thus lived, and thus died, Nicholas Ferrar, the best of sons, of brothers, and of friends, on Monday, December 2nd, 1637, precisely as the clock struck one, the hour at which, for many years, he constantly rose, to pay his addresses to heaven<sup>1</sup>.

REFLECTION.—A consideration of death and judgment to come, should influence our thinking, reading, and indeed all our daily pursuits and occupations, and should prevail on us to devote our time and talents to His service, who lent them unto us, that we may at last render unto him a just and true account of the uses to which they have been applied. It is a plain rule of Scripture, "Do all to the glory of God<sup>2</sup>."

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MRS. JANE RATCLIFFE.

DIED AUG. 17, A.D. 1638.

SHE was the niece of Edward Brerewood, first Professor of Astronomy at Gresham College, in London.

She had in readiness some special considerations, to be remembered at the time of her departure,

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog., from Dr. Peckard.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x. 31.

which she left under her own hand, and which are as follow, under the two articles,—Why she desired to die ; and why she did not fear death.

“ First,—Why I desire to die.

“ I desire to die, because I want, while I live here, the glorious presence of God, which I love and long for, and the sweet fellowship of angels and saints.

“ I desire to die, because, while I live, I shall want the perfection of my nature, and be as an estranged, banished person from my Father’s house.

“ I desire to die, because I would not live to offend so good a God, and grieve his Holy Spirit, for his loving kindness is better than life itself, and He is abundant in mercy to me ; and it many times lies as a heavy load upon my heart to think of displeasing Him.

“ I desire to die, because this world is generally infected with the plague of sin, and some have this plague-sore running upon them, and I myself am tainted with the same disease ; so that, while I live here, I can be in no place, nor in any company, but I am still in danger of being infected, or of infecting others ; and if this world hates me because I endeavour to follow goodness, how will it rejoice if my foot do but slip ! and how woeful would my life be to me if I should give occasion for the world to triumph or blaspheme on my account. I cannot choose but desire to die, when I consider that sin, like a leprosy, hath so corrupted me, that there is no soundness in me : my mind, my memory, my will, and my affections, yea, my conscience, are still impure. In every faculty of my soul there is a miserable mixture of vile infection, which makes me weary of my life : and all this is the worse because it is incurable, and a constant companion of my life ; so that I can go

no whither to avoid it. There is no business that I can dispatch, that concerns my happiness, but there is a mutiny in my heart. Though the works of God be all fair, yet there are in my nature many defects, insufficiencies, mistakes, and transgressions; so that I may say innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up. I therefore desire heaven for holiness, rather than for happiness, that I might sin no more. I desire that condition in which I may most glorify God. I desire to die, because of Satan's perpetual assaults. I can stand no where before the Lord on earth, but one evil spirit or another is at my right hand, and I must of necessity enter into conflict with them and their temptations, and be buffeted by them, which is a thousand-fold worse than death. It is more easy to wrestle with flesh and blood than with principalities and powers, with spiritual wickednesses and the rulers of the darkness of this world; for they are subtle and cruel, and, like roaring lions, they go about seeking whom they may devour.

"I desire to die, because by death I shall rest from the hard labours of this life. I desire to die, because nothing in this world can give me solid and durable contentment. I am less in liking of life, and have the greater desire of death, when I consider the misery that may come both on my body and estate. Fearful alterations may come. Besides, I daily suffer the loss of my friends, who were the companions of my life, and the channels of much pleasure to me; and those whom I lose by my life, I shall find by my death, and enjoy in another world to all eternity. As for my leaving my children it doth not much trouble me, for that God who hath given them life, and breath, and all

they have, while I am living, can without me provide for them when I am dead. My God will be their God, if they are his; and if they are not, what comfort would it be for me to live? My life would be exceeding bitter to me if I should see them dishonour God whom I so much love."

The reasons why she did not fear death were as follow :

"I fear not death, because it is but the separation of the body from the soul; and that is but a shadow of the body of death<sup>4</sup>. Whereas the separation of the soul from God by sin<sup>5</sup>, is death indeed.

"I fear not death, because death is such an enemy as hath been often vanquished, and because I am armed for it, and the weapons of my warfare are mighty through God, and I am assured of victory.

"I do not fear death for the pain of it; for I am persuaded I have endured as great pains in life as I shall find in death, and death will be the cure of all my pains—and because Christ died a terrible and cursed death, any kind of death may be blessed to me—and because that God, who hath greatly loved me in life, will not neglect me in death, but his Spirit will strengthen and comfort me, all the time of the combat. I do not fear death for any loss, for I shall only lose my body by it, and that is but a prison to my soul, or an old rotten house or tattered garment. Nay, I shall not lose that neither, for I shall have it restored at my Saviour's second coming much better than now it is; for this vile body shall be like the body of Christ, and by death I shall obtain far better life."

<sup>4</sup> Rom. vii. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. lix. 2.

such a calm manner, that when she was thought to be asleep, she was found to be dead<sup>9</sup>.

**PRECEPT.**—In all our trials and troubles, let us put our trust in God : His power and goodness will support us in the time of need.

“ Who place on Zion’s God their trust,  
Like Zion’s rock shall stand ;  
Like her, immoveably be fix’d  
By His Almighty hand.”

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SIR HENRY WOTTON.

DIED 1639. AGED 71.

SIR HENRY WOTTON was an individual of great piety and learning, who was frequently commissioned by his country as ambassador to foreign nations; and finally, was appointed Provost of Eton

⁹ Life and death of Mrs. Jane Ratcliffe, by the Rev. John Ley, Vicar of Great Budworth, and Prebendary of Chester Cathedral. Ed. 1640, p. 85, et seq.

College. About five months before his death, he became much more retired and contemplative than before ; in which time he was often visited by Mr. John Hales, then a Fellow of that College, to whom, upon an occasion, he spake to this purpose :

“ I have in my passage to my grave met with most of those joys of which a discursive soul is capable, and been entertained with more inferior pleasures than the sons of men are usually partakers of: nevertheless in this voyage I have not always floated on the calm sea of content, but have often met with cross winds and storms, and with many troubles of mind, and temptations to evil ; and yet though I have been and am a man compassed about with human frailties, Almighty God hath by his grace prevented me from making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, the thought of which is now the joy of my heart, and I most humbly praise Him for it ; and I humbly acknowledge that it was not myself, but He, that hath kept me to this great age ; and let him take the glory of his great mercy. And my dear friend, I now see that I draw near my harbour of death, that will secure me from all the future storms and waves of this world : and I praise God, I am willing to leave it, and expect a better world, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and I long for it.”

The beginning of December following, he was seized violently with a quotidian fever, in the tenth fit of which fever his better part, that part of Sir Henry Wotton which could not die, put off mortality with as much content and cheerfulness as human frailty is capable of ; being then in great tranquillity of mind, and in perfect peace with God and man.

Of his poems, one entitled, “ A Hymn to God, in a night of my latter sickness,” is said to be

remarkable for pointed energy of expression and harmonious versification ¹.

The following are the three last verses of a hymn written by Sir Henry Wotton, when he was an ambassador at Venice, in the time of a great sickness there.

"Let these poor notes ascend unto Thy throne,
Where majesty doth sit, with mercy crown'd ;
Where my Redeemer lives, in whom alone
The errors of my wand'ring life are drown'd,
Where all the quire of Heav'n resound the same,
That only Thine, Thine is the saving Name.

"Well then, my soul, joy in the midst of pain ;
Thy Christ that conquer'd hell shall from above
With greater triumph yet return again,
And conquer his own justice with his love ;
Commanding earth and seas to render those
Unto his bliss, for whom He paid his woes.

"Now have I done ; now are my thoughts at peace ;
And now my joys are stronger than my grief ;
I feel those comforts that shall never cease,
Future in hope, but present in belief.
Thy words are true, Thy promises are just,
And Thou wilt find Thy dearly bought—in dust."

"Reliquiæ Wottonianæ," 1650, p. 530.

REFLECTION.—In passing over the ocean of life we must not expect always to sail in smooth waters. Storms and tempests may meet us in our course, and raging billows may shake the frail vessel. But blessed are they who make God their haven of refuge ; for truly may they say, "We have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us ; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast ; and which entereth into that within the veil ²."

¹ Life of Sir H. Wotton, by Izaak Walton, in Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog., vol. iv. p. 109.

² Heb. vi. 18, 19.

NICHOLAS FERRAR, JUNIOR.

DIED A.D. 1640. AGED 21.

HE was the son of Mr. John Ferrar, and nephew of Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, whose last hours we have recorded, and by whom he was so well educated, as through industry and acquirements to attract the notice of the King, Charles I. and of the Archbishop of Canterbury. When the Bishop, accompanied by Mr. John Ferrar, called upon the young student, the bishop embraced him and gave him his blessing. Nicholas Ferrar, kneeling down, took the Bishop by the hand and kissed it. He took him up in his arms, and laid his hand to his cheek, and earnestly besought God Almighty to bless him, and increase all graces in him, and fit him every day more and more for an instrument of His glory here upon earth, and a saint in heaven; "which," said he, "is the only happiness that can be desired, and ought to be our chief end in all our actions. God bless you! God bless you!"

So they parted from his grace, but he never saw him more. For within a few days after, Nicholas Ferrar fell ill: and on Easter day he was desirous to receive the communion at St. Paul's, whither he went early in the morning, and communicated; and, returning home, had little appetite to his dinner, eating little or nothing. He went to a sermon in the afternoon; but at night grew somewhat worse. The physicians prescribed things for him, but he mended not; but with great patience and cheerfulness did bear his sickness, and was very comfortable in it, to all that came to visit him, wholly referring himself to God's good will and pleasure; only telling his friends, and the

Bishop of Peterborough, Dr. Towers, that loved him dearly, and came to visit him twice in that short time, that he was no way troubled to die, and to go to heaven, where he knew was only peace and quiet and joys permanent; whereas all things in the world were but trouble and vexation; and death must be the end of all men, and he that went soonest to heaven was the happiest man. The Bishop would say, when he went away, and had a long time talked with him, that Nicholas Ferrar was better prepared to die than he, and was a true child of God, and could comfort himself in God, without directions from him, or others: that his pious education under his pious uncle of blessed memory, his old and dear friend, was now showed forth in these his so young years; that they had taken mighty root downward, and in his soul, and now sprang up with not only leaves and fair blossoms, but with good and ripe fruit of heavenly matters. It joyed his heart to see him so disposed to God-ward, and to so willingly leave the world, and the late testimonies of worth that he had received from the best in the land. That sure he was too good longer to stay here. God would take him to heaven, and willed his father to prepare for his departure; and to take it with all thankfulness to God; and not look what himself, he might think, had here lost on earth, but to that crown which his good son, by the mercies of God and merits of his Saviour, he was persuaded would now enjoy in heaven. "He is too good; he is too good," said he, "to live longer in these, in approaching times."

And when at other times some friend would say to him, "Good cousin, are you not grieved to leave this world; you are now so young, and in the flower of your youth and hopes?" He would

cheerfully answer, "No truly; I leave all to God's good will and pleasure, that is my best Father, and knoweth what is best for me. Alas! I am too young to be mine own judge what is best for me, to die, or live; but let all be as God's will is. If I live, I desire it may be to his further glory, and mine own soul's good, and the comfort and service that I intend to be to my father, that loves me so dearly, and in his old age to be his servant. If I die, I hope my father will submit all to God's will and pleasure, and rejoice at my happiness in heaven, where by the merits of my blessed Lord and Saviour, I know I shall go out of this wretched life."

In this manner, and upon the visits of friends he would discourse; and the Bishop came to him two days before he died, and found him most cheerful to die, and to be with God, as he would say to him; who gave him absolution, and with many tears departed, saying to his father, "God give you consolation; and prepare yourself to part with your good son. He will in a few hours, I think, go to a better world; for he is no way for this, that I see, by his body and by his soul. Be of good comfort; you give him but again to Him that gave him you for a season." And in two days after, God took him away, who died praying and calling upon God, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul! Lord, receive it. Amen³."

REFLECTION.—When death deprives us of the younger members of our family, great will be our consolation if we can say, "We have trained them up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,' and prepared them for another and a better

³ Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog., vol. iv.

world." Our hearts will then respond to the language of holy Scripture, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

BISHOP BEDELL.

DIED 1641. AGED 70-71.

BISHOP BEDELL was eminent for his piety and usefulness. He was Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, and afterwards consecrated Bishop of Kilmore. He translated the Old Testament into the Irish language—a work which was afterwards published by Mr. Robert Boyle. Bedell was very active in his endeavours to convert the Roman Catholics, but conducted himself with so much mildness and prudence as very generally to gain their esteem. When the Rebellion broke out in Ireland, Bishop Bedell was for a time unmolested by the Roman Catholic insurgents; and while his Protestant neighbours in general were driven from their homes, the sanctity of his mansion was respected; and it might probably have so continued, if he had not given offence by granting a general asylum to the distressed Protestants. On his refusal to dismiss some of them, he was, together with his family, seized and conveyed to a ruinous castle in the midst of a lake. The hardships he there suffered proved fatal; for being removed to the house of Mr. Sheridan, a Protestant minister, he was seized with a fit of illness which terminated his life; of which event the following are the particulars.

When he apprehended his speedy change, he called for his sons and his sons' wives, and spoke to them, at several times, as near in these words as their memories could serve them to write down after :—

“ I am going the way of all flesh. I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. Knowing, therefore, that shortly I must put off this tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me, I know also that if this my earthly tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, an house not made with hands, a fair mansion in the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God. Therefore, to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain ; which increaseth my desire even now to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better than to continue here, in all the false, transitory, and vain pleasures of this world, of which I have seen an end. Harken, therefore, unto the last words of your dying father. I am no more in this world, but ye are in the world. I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God, through the all-sufficient merits of Christ my Redeemer, who ever lives to make intercession for me, who is a propitiation for all my sins, and washed me from them all in his own blood, who is worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power, who hath created all things, and for whose pleasure they are and were created.

“ My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high, that I have endeavoured to glorify God on earth, and in the ministry of the gospel of His dear Son, which was committed to my trust ; I have finished the work which He gave me to do, as a faithful ambassador of Christ, and steward of the mysteries of God. I have preached righteousness

in the great congregation; so I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation; I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation of mankind. He is near that justifieth me, that I have not concealed the words of the Holy One; but the words that He gave to me I have given to you, and ye have received them. I had a desire and resolution to walk before God (in every station of my pilgrimage, from my youth up to this day) in truth, and with an upright heart, and to do that which was upright in his eyes, to the utmost of my power; and what things were gain to me formerly, these things I now count loss for Christ; yea, doubtless, and I account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and I account them but dung, that I may win and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. I press, therefore, towards the mark for the prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ.

“Let nothing separate you from the love of Christ; neither tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword: for his sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death,

nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus my Lord. Therefore love not the world, nor the things of the world, but prepare daily and hourly for death, that now besieges us on every side; and be faithful unto death, that we may meet together joyfully on the right hand of Christ, at the last day, and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, with all those that are clothed with white robes, in sign of innocency, and palms in their hands, in sign of victory, which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They shall hunger no more, nor thirst, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

“Choose rather, with Moses, to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, which will be bitterness in the latter end. Look, therefore, for sufferings, and to be daily made partakers of the sufferings of Christ, to fill up that which is behind of the affliction of Christ in your flesh, for his body’s sake, which is the Church. What can you look for, but one woe after another, while the Man of Sin is thus suffered to rage and to make havoc of God’s people at his mere pleasure, while men are divided about trifles, that ought to have been more vigilant over us, and careful of those whose blood is precious in God’s sight, though now shed every where like water. If ye suffer for righteousness, happy are ye. Be not afraid of their terror, neither be ye troubled; and be in nothing terrified by

your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For to you is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for his sake. Rejoice, therefore, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. And if ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; the Spirit of glory and of Christ resteth on you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified.

"God will surely visit you in due time, and turn your captivity as the rivers in the south, and bring you back into your possession in this land, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; yet ye shall reap in joy, though now ye sow in tears; all your losses shall be recompensed with abundant advantage, for my God will supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ, who is able to do exceeding abundantly for us above all that we are able to ask or think."

After this, he blessed his children, and those that stood about him, in an audible voice, in these words: "God of his infinite mercy bless you all, and present you holy, and unblameable, and un-reproveable in his sight, that we may meet together at the right hand of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Amen." To which he added these words, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course of my ministry and life together. Though grievous wolves have entered among us, not sparing the flock, yet I trust the great Shepherd of his flock will save and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in this

cloudy and dark day; that they shall be no more a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. O Lord! I have waited for thy salvation."

And after a little interval, he said, "I have kept the faith once given to the saints; for the which cause I have also suffered these things. But I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." After this time he spoke little; for as his sickness increased, his speech failed, and he slumbered out most of the time, and it appeared that he was cheerfully waiting for his change, which at last came, about midnight, on the 7th of February. He was interred in the churchyard of Kilmore; and the Irish insurgents who attended the solemnity, as a token of respect, fired a volley over his grave, some of them exclaiming, "*Requiescat in pace ultimus Anglorum*."

REFLECTION.—This servant of God, who was very much tried, drew his waters of comfort from that never failing spring, the word of God, and thereby was his soul refreshed and sustained. When we hear of Christians having received consolation from some special portions of Holy Scripture, we should not only refer to and read, but mark, learn, and inwardly digest those chapters and verses which benefited them; for peradventure God, who has said, "My word shall not return unto me void," may equally bless the same to our edification and comfort. The five last verses of Rom. viii. gave Bishop Bedell great support in his last hours.

⁵ The Life of Bishop Bedell, by Bp. Burnet, 1685.



FRANCIS QUARLES.

DIED 1644. Aged 52.

HE was the author of "Emblems," and of other works in poetry and prose, of a moral and religious kind. He was appointed under-secretary to Archbishop Usher, in Ireland, from which country he was driven, with the loss of nearly all his property, by the rebellion of 1641: and during the civil wars in England the remainder of his property, with his books and manuscripts, became sequestrated.

As gold is purified by the fire, so were all his Christian virtues more refined and remarkable during the time of his sickness. His patience was wonderful, insomuch that he would confess no pain, even then, when all his friends perceived his disease to be mortal; but still rendered thanks to God for his especial love to him, in taking him into his own hands to chastise, while others were exposed to the fury of their enemies, the power of pistols, and the trampling of horses. He expressed great sorrow for his sins; and when it was told him, that his friends conceived he did

thereby much harm to himself, he answered, "they were not his friends that would not give him leave to be penitent." His exhortations to his friends that came to visit him were most divine, wishing them to have a care of the expense of their time, and every day to call themselves to an account; so that when they came to their bed of sickness, they might lie upon it with a rejoicing heart." And doubtless such an one was his, inso-much that he thanked God, that whereas he might justly have expected that his "conscience should look him in the face like a lion," it rather looked upon him "like a lamb;" and that God had forgiven him his sins, and sealed his pardon; and many other heavenly expressions to the like effect. I might here add, what blessed advice he gave in particular, to her about to become a widow, still to trust in God, whose promise is to provide for the widow and the fatherless, &c.

His charity in freely forgiving his greatest enemies was equally Christian-like; and when he heard that the individual whose vindictive conduct towards him had been the chief cause of his illness, "was called to an account for it," his answer was, "God forbid; I seek not revenge, I freely forgive him and the rest."

The remainder of his time was occupied in contemplation of God and meditations upon the Holy Scripture, especially upon Christ's sufferings, and what a benefit those have that by faith could lay hold on Him, and what virtue there was in the least drop of his precious blood; intermingling here and there many devout prayers and ejaculations, which continued with him as long as his speech, and after, as could be perceived by some imperfect expressions. At which time a friend of his, exhorting him to apply himself to finish his

course here, and prepare himself for the world to come, he spake in Latin to this effect ; “ O sweet Saviour of the world, let thy last words upon the cross be my last words in the world. Into thy hands, Lord, I commend my spirit ; and what I cannot utter with my mouth, accept from my heart and soul ; ” which words being uttered distinctly to the understanding of his friend, he fell again into his former contemplations and prayers, and so quietly gave up his soul to God, the 8th day of September, 1644, after he had lived fifty-two years, and lieth buried in the parish church of St. Leonard’s, in Foster-lane.

Francis Quarles in his religious principles was firmly attached to the church of England ; and, when dying, he requested his friends that they would make it universally known, that “ as he was trained up and lived in the true Protestant religion, so in that religion he died ‘.’ ”

REFLECTION.—It has been said truly and agreeably with all men’s experience, that if Christians excelled in no other privilege, yet far happier are they than other men, for that their hopes are always better.

⁶ Church of England Magazine, vol. iv. pp. 71, 72.



KING CHARLES THE FIRST.

BEHEADED JAN. 30, 1649.

ON the morning of his death, King Charles, according to the relation of his faithful attendant, Sir Thomas Herbert, awoke about two hours before day break, after a sound sleep of four hours. He called to Herbert, who lay on a pallet by his bed side, and bade him rise, "For," said the king, "I will get up; I have a great work to do this day. I fear not death; death is not terrible to me. I bless God, I am prepared." Soon after the king was dressed, Bishop Juxon came to him, according to his appointment the night before. He remained an hour in private with him, when Herbert was called in, and the bishop prayed with the king, using the prayers of the Church, and then read the 27th chapter of St. Matthew, which so beautifully describes the passion of our Saviour. The king thanked the bishop for his choice of the lesson; but he was surprised and gratified to learn that it was the lesson for the day, according to the calendar.

Attended by the bishop on the one side and

Col. Tomlinson on the other, he walked out through the garden of the palace into the park, and said as he went along, "He now went to strive for a heavenly crown with less solicitude than he had often encouraged his soldiers to fight for an earthly diadem." When delayed at the Cabinet chamber of Whitehall, he offered up several prayers, and entered into religious discourse with the bishop. Herbert and the bishop were deeply affected at the signal for their final separation from their sovereign and master. The king stretched out his hand to them, which they kissed, falling on their knees and weeping, the king helping the aged bishop to rise.

In his address to those about him, he said, "Now to show you that I am a good Christian, I hope there is a good man, (pointing to Bishop Juxon,) that will bear me witness that I have forgiven all the world, and even those in particular that have been the chief causes of my death. I pray God forgive them. But this is not all; my charity must go further; I wish that they may repent. For indeed they have committed a great sin in that particular. I pray God, with St. Stephen, that it may not be laid to their charge; nay, not only so, but that they may take the right way to the peace of the kingdom; for my charity commands me not only to forgive particular men, but to endeavour, to the last gasp, the peace of the kingdom. You must give God his due, by regulating rightly his Church, according to the Scripture, which is now out of order. I pray God it be not laid to your charge, that I am the martyr of the people. I have delivered my conscience. I pray God you take those courses that are the best for the good of the kingdom, and your own salvation."

Bishop Juxon then said, "Though your Majesty's affections may be very well known as to religion; yet it may be expected that you should say something thereof for the world's satisfaction." The king replied, "I thank you heartily, my lord. In troth, sirs, my conscience in religion, I think is very well known to all the world; and therefore I declare before you all, that I die a Christian, according to the profession of the Church of England, as I found it left me by my father." Turning to the bishop, he said, "I have a good cause, and a gracious God on my side." The Bishop.—"There is but one stage more, this stage is turbulent and troublesome; it is a short one, but you may consider it will soon carry you a very great way; it will carry you from earth to heaven, and there you will find a great deal of cordial joy and comfort." The King.—"I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be, no disturbance in the world." The Bishop.—"You are exchanged from a temporary to an eternal crown—a good exchange⁷."

Copy of a daily Prayer, entirely in the Handwriting of King Charles the First; from the Autograph in her Majesty's State Paper Office: such handwriting having been identified by the late Keeper of the State Paper Office, who compared this MS. with others there deposited.

"A PRAYER" [dated on the back] "1631."

"Good Lord I thanke [thee] for keeping mee

⁷ Trial of Charles the First, &c.

"this ^{day}/_{night} ; I humbly beseeche thee to keepe
 "mee this ^{night}/_{day} from all dangers or mischances
 "that may happen to my boddie, and all evell
 "thoughts which may assalt or hurt my sowel for
 "Jesus Christ his sake: and looke upon me thy
 "unworthie servant, who here prostrates himselfe
 "at thy throne of grace; but looke upon mee O
 "Father through the merites and mediation of
 "Jesus Christ thy beloved Sone, in whom thou
 "art onlie well pleased; for of my selfe, I am not
 "worthie to stand in thy presence, or to speake
 "withe my uncleane lips to thee, most holly and
 "eternall God; for thou knowest that in sinn I
 "was conceived and borne, and that ever since I
 "have lived in iniquitie, so that I have broken all
 "thy holly comãdments, by sinfull motions, evell
 "words and wicked workes, om̃itting many duties
 "I ought to doe, and com̃itting manie vyces, which
 "thou hast forbidden under paine of heavie dis-
 "pleasure: as for sinnes O Lord they are innu-
 "merable; in the multitude, therefore, of thy
 "mercies, and by the merites of Jesus Christ I
 "intreate thy Devyne Majestie, that thou wouldest
 "not enter into judgement with thy servant; nor
 "be extreame to marke what is done amisse; but
 "bee thou mercifull to mee, and washe away all
 "my sinnes, with the merites of that pretius blood
 "that Jesus Christ shed for mee: and not only
 "washe away all my sinnes, but also to purge my
 "hart, by [thy] Holly Spirit, from the drosse of
 "my naturall corruption; and as thou doest add
 "dayes to my life, so (good Lord) add repentance
 "to my dayes, that when I have passed this
 "mortall lyfe, I may bee a partaker of thy ever-
 "lasting kingdome through Jesus Christ our
 "Lorde."

REFLECTION.—However bleak and stormy the night may be, and however oppressive may be our adversaries, we should look forward to the morn of the resurrection and to “the times of the restitution of all things^s.”

FRANCES, COUNTESS OF CARBERY.

DIED 1650.

OF her sickness and death, Bishop Jeremy Taylor presents to us the following account:—

I know not by what instrument it happened, but when death drew near, before it made any show upon her body, or revealed itself by a natural signification, it was conveyed to her spirit. She had a strange secret persuasion that this should be her last scene of life: and we have known that the soul, when she is about to disrobe herself of her upper garment, sometimes speaks very excellent words; sometimes it is prophetic; sometimes God, by a superinduced persuasion, wrought by instruments or accidents of his own, serves the end of his own providence and the salvation of the soul. But so it was, that the thought of death dwelt long with her, and grew, from the first steps of fancy and fear, to a consent, from thence to a strange credulity and expectation of it; and without the violence of sickness, she died, as if she had done it voluntarily and by design.

She had, in her sickness (if I may so call it, or rather, in the solemnities and graver preparations towards death), some curious and well-becoming

^s Acts iii. 21.

fears concerning the final state of her soul. But from thence she passed into a kind of trance; and as soon as she came forth of it,—as if it had been a vision, or that she had conversed with an angel, and from his hand had received a label or scroll of the book of life, and there seen her name enrolled,—she cried out aloud, “Glory be to God on high! Now I am sure I shall be saved.” Concerning which manner of discoursing, we are wholly ignorant what judgment can be made; but certainly there are strange things in the other world, and so there are in all the immediate preparations to it; and a little glimpse of heaven, a minute’s conversing with an angel, any ray of God, any communication extraordinary from the Spirit of comfort, which God gives to his servants in strange and unknown manners, are infinitely far from illusions; and they shall then be understood by us, when we feel them, and when our new and strange needs shall be refreshed by such unusual visitations⁹.

CONSOLATION FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.
—“I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them¹.”

⁹ Bishop Jeremy Taylor’s Funeral Sermon on Frances, Countess of Carbery.

¹ Rev. xiv. 13.



JAMES, EARL OF DERBY.

DIED 1651.

A NOBLEMAN of high Christian principles, who died in the cause of his church and king. He was taken prisoner at the disastrous battle of Worcester, September 3, 1651; and was beheaded, in violation of a promise of quarter, on the 15th of October following.

Having only till three o'clock on that day allowed to prepare for his death, after very short notice, he spent all that time with those friends who were with him, in praying with them, and telling them how he had lived, and how he had prepared for his death, and how the Lord had strengthened him against the terrors of it. And, after such and the like words, he desired them to pray with him again, and then giving some good instructions to his son, the Lord Strange, he desired to be in private, where (says the narrator) we left him with his God, and where he continued on his knees in prayer, for a good while: then calling for us again, he told us how willing he was to die; how contented he was to part with this

world, and that the fear of death was no great trouble to him, since his imprisonment, though he had always two or three soldiers with naked swords, night and day, in his chamber.

To the people he said, "I beseech you pray for me to the last; the God of heaven bless you, the Son of God bless you, and God the Holy Ghost fill you with comfort. Truly, to me, I die for God, the king, and the laws, and this makes me not ashamed of my life, nor afraid at my death!

"Now I must die; and that I am ready to die, I thank my God with a quiet and good conscience, without any malice to any, upon any grounds whatsoever, though others would not find mercy for me, upon just and fair grounds; but I forgive them, following the example of my Saviour, who prayed for his enemies, and so do I pray for mine.

"As for my faith and religion, thus much I have to say at this time; I profess my faith to be in one God, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, who died for me and all mankind, and from whom I look for my salvation, in and through his only merits and sufferings. And I do die a dutiful son of the church of England, as it was established in my late master's reign. I thank my God for the quiet of my conscience at this time, and for the assurance of those joys which He hath promised, and are prepared for all those that love, adore, and fear Him. His last words were, "Blessed be God's holy name, for ever and ever. Amen. Let the whole earth be filled with his glory²!"

REFLECTION FROM THE BOOK OF THE REVE-

² Memoirs of the Ancient and Honourable House of Stanley, p. 124, et seq.

LATION OF ST. JOHN.—“ Upon such the second death hath no power.”



WILLIAM GOUGE, D.D.

DIED 1653. AGED 79.

DR. Gouge was a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and author of "The Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews." His funeral sermon was preached by Tillotson.

Great was his patience under the visiting hand of God, especially in his old age, when God visited him with painful maladies. Though by reason of the bitterness of his pains, and that deadly arrow (as he often called it) in his side, which he knew could never be plucked out of it but by death, namely, his asthma, which he got by an excessive cold in attending upon public employments; notwithstanding, by reason of these, he hath been often heard to groan, yet was he never heard once to repine. But he would often say, "Soul, be silent, soul, be patient; it is thy God and Father,

that thus ordereth thy estate; thou art his clay, He may tread and trample upon thee, as it pleaseth Him; thou hast deserved much more; it is enough that thou art kept out of hell; though thy pain be grievous, yet it is tolerable; thy God affords some intermissions; He will turn it to thy good, and at length put an end to all; none of these can be expected in the grave." He would often make mention of the extent of obedience, which, he said, "was not only to endeavour to do what God requireth, but also patiently to bear what God's will is to lay upon the creature; as Christ Himself, though He were the Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." In his greatest pangs he oft used this speech of Job, "Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil?" He often commended his soul unto Christ, and would say, "I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day." When any of his friends went about to comfort him in those gifts which God had bestowed upon him, and works which He had wrought by him, he would answer, "I dare not think of any such things for comfort: Jesus Christ, and what He hath done and endured, is the only ground of sure comfort." Many that came to visit him in his weakness, professed that they went away better than they came, by reason of those savoury and gracious exhortations that proceeded from him.

"On Saturday," says his biographer, "he had no desire to arise out of his bed, neither indeed could he in regard of his weakness, which was such as he said, 'Now I have not long to live in this world; the time of my departure is at hand; I am going to my desired haven;' the apprehension whereof was no little joy unto him;

for he had often said to such of his friends as came to visit him in his sickness, 'I am most willing to die, having, I bless God, nothing to do but to die.' Indeed, he sometimes seemed to be in Paul's strait, between life and death, having a desire to depart, that he might be with Christ, which was best; but yet very desirous was he to finish his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, which he knew would be useful to the Church of God, and in that respect was willing to live; and God so far answered his desire in that particular, that he lived to finish it within half a chapter.

"But when he perceived that his time in this world could not be long, O how sweet and joyful was the apprehension of death unto him, which he often termed his last friend, next unto Jesus Christ. And that Saturday, though he kept his bed through weakness, yet was he more wakeful, and his spirit more lively and cheerful than for several days before; which questionless was from his joyful apprehension of his approaching departure. His speeches that day were more than ordinarily heavenly, speaking much in admiration of the freeness of God's grace, and riches of his mercy in Jesus Christ. As while he lived, he led an heavenly life, so about the time of his death, by those comforts and joys which he found in his soul, he seemed to be in heaven while he was upon the earth; and so continued full of sweet comfort and heavenly expressions, to the last of his understanding and speech, which continued till Monday morning, when both failed him, from which time he lay breathing but shorter and shorter, till eight of the o'clock that night. About which time, in the presence of all his children, and divers friends, he quietly slept in the Lord, making a happy change

from earth to heaven, having served God faithfully and painfully in his generation³.”

A PRECEPT FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE.—“ My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth⁴.”



JOHN SELDEN.

DIED 1654. AGED 69-70.

SELDEN was a scholar of high attainments, of whom Grotius said, that “ Selden was the glory of the English nation.” Sensible that his end was approaching, he sent for his friends Primate Usher, and Dr. Langbaine, with whom he discoursed concerning his state of mind. He observed that he had his study full of books and papers of most subjects in the world, and owned that, out of the

³ Life and Death of Dr. Gouge, prefixed to his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, 1655.

⁴ Heb. xii. 5, 6.

numberless volumes he had read and digested, at that time he could not recollect any passage wherein he could rest his soul, save out of the Holy Scriptures, wherein the most remarkable passage that lay upon his spirit was, Titus ii. 11—15. “For the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

The import of these verses is the assurance of salvation, through the redemption of Christ, to all who live righteously; a truth which he therefore regarded as the essence of the Christian revelation⁵.

REFLECTION.—We have here the very valuable testimony of one of our most learned men, that the truths of the Holy Bible afford the only satisfactory and sure foundation of hope for eternity; and that faith and holiness are essentially necessary if we would be blessed with a happy death and a glorious resurrection.

⁵ Aikin, and Chalmers' Biog. Dict.



BISHOP HALL.

DIED 1656. AGED 81.

BISHOP HALL was the pious and eloquent author of "Contemplations on Scripture," and other works. Driven out of his palace at Norwich without being allowed sufficient time to look out for another residence, he retired with his family to a small estate which he rented at Heigham, a hamlet in the western suburbs of Norwich, where he terminated his earthly pilgrimage, after all the outrages, persecutions, and hardships he endured in those turbulent times, and entered into that rest, which remaineth for the people of God; where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are rest. During his retirement at Heigham our good bishop spent the remainder of his days in doing all the good he could. He was ready on all occasions to preach in any of the churches in Norwich, as appears from several sermons still extant, "till he was first forbidden by men, and at last disabled by God." And when he could not preach as often, and as long as he was able, he was

as diligent a hearer as he had been a preacher. "How oft have we seen him," says Whitefoot, "walking alone, like old Jacob with his staff, to Bethel, the house of God."

When he was in the eightieth year of his age he preached in Heigham Church the forty-second sermon in the fifth volume of his works, entitled, "Life, a sojourning," from 1 Pet. i. 17. "If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." The venerable and aged Bishop on this occasion observed to his audience, "that it hath pleased the Providence of my God so to contrive it, that this day, this very morning, fourscore years ago, I was born into the world. A great time since, ye are ready to say; and so indeed it seems to you, that look at it forward; but to me that look at it past, it seems so short, that it is gone like a tale that is told, or a dream by night, and looks but like yesterday. It can be no offence for me to say, that many of you who hear me this day, are not like to see so many suns walk over your heads as I have done. There is not one of us that can assure himself of his continuance here one day. We are all tenants at will, and for aught we know, may be turned out of these clay cottages at an hour's warning. Oh, then, what should we do, but as wise husbandmen, carefully and seasonably provide ourselves a surer and more during tenure?"

The minds of the audience could not fail to be impressed by such suitable remarks from so venerable and aged a pastor; indeed, it was the Bishop's endeavour in his last year to keep in view "that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and to prepare others for that change by his last writings and sermons, which particularly treated

upon the last things, death and judgment, heaven and hell.

He spent much of his last years in devotion and meditation, lamenting the sufferings and calamities of Church and State. Under all his sufferings he distributed a weekly charity to a certain number of poor widows out of the little which was left him. During his last illness he evinced extraordinary patience and submission to the Divine will. He was afflicted with violent and acute pains, which he bore most patiently, till death put an end to all his sufferings and troubles. It is said that he punctually foretold the night of his death, and accordingly gave orders for the time and manner of his funeral; he was gathered to his fathers in a good old age. By his will he desired to be buried without any funeral pomp, at the discretion of his executors, with this only monition, that he did not hold God's house a meet repository for the dead bodies of the greatest saints.

On occasion of his wife's death, he wrote his treatise entitled, "Songs in the Night, or Cheerfulness under Affliction." In the letter addressed to a dear and worthy friend, prefixed to his treatise, the Bishop observes, "Indeed it pleased my God lately to exercise me with a double affliction at once; pain of body, and grief of mind, for the sickness and death of my dear consort. I struggled with them both, as I might; and by God's mercy attained to a meek and humble submission to that just and gracious hand, and a quiet composedness of thoughts; but yet, methought, I found myself wanting in that comfortable disposition of heart, and lively elevation of spirit, which some holy souls have professed to feel in their lowest depression, fetching that inward consolation from heaven, which can more than counterpoise their heaviest

crosses. Upon this occasion you see here how I held fit to busy my thoughts, labouring by their holy agitation, to work myself, through the blessing of the Almighty, to such a temper as might give an obedient welcome to so smarting an affliction; and that even while I weep, I might yet smile upon the face of my heavenly Father, whose stripes I do so tenderly suffer. If in some other discourses I have endeavoured to instruct others, in this I mean to teach myself, and to win my heart to a willing and contented acquiescence in the good pleasure of my God, how harsh soever it seems to rebellious nature."

In one part of this excellent treatise, speaking of his heavy afflictions and losses, the pious and aged bishop says, "Come then, all ye earthly crosses, and muster up all your forces against me. Here is that which is able to make me more than conqueror over you all." (He had spoken before of that blessed eternity which he wished to keep in view.) "Have I lost my goods, and foregone a fair estate? Had all the earth been mine, what is it to heaven? Had I been the lord of all the world, what were this to a kingdom of glory? Have I parted with a dear consort, the partner of my sorrows for these forty-eight years? She is but stept a little before me to happy rest, which I am panting for; and therein I shall speedily overtake her. In the mean time and ever, my soul is espoused to that glorious and immortal Husband, from whom it shall never be parted. Am I bereaved of some of my dear children, whose hopes promised me comfort in my declined age? Why am I not rather thankful it hath pleased my God out of my loins to furnish heaven with some happy guests? Why do I not, instead of mourning for their loss, sing praises to

God for preferring them to that eternal blessedness? Am I afflicted with bodily pain and sickness, which banisheth all sleep from my eyes, and exercises me with a lingering torture? Ere long this momentary distemper shall end in an everlasting rest. Am I threatened by the sword of an enemy? Suppose that man to be one of the guardians of Paradise, and that sword as flaming as it is sharp, that one stroke shall let me into that place of inconceivable pleasure, and admit me to feed on the tree of life for ever.

“Cheer up then, O my soul ; and upon the fixed apprehension of the glory to be revealed, while thy weak partner, my body, droops and languishes under the sad load of years and infirmities, sing thou to thy God even in the midnight of thy sorrows, and in the deepest darkness of death itself, songs of confidence, songs of spiritual joy, songs of praise and thanksgiving ; saying, with all the glorified ones, ‘ Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. *Amen* ‘.’ ”

REFLECTION.—However severe our sufferings or bitter our bereavements, let us ever comfort ourselves with the truth, that to all God’s servants, though sorrow endureth for a night, joy cometh in the morning⁷.

⁶ Life of Bishop Hall, by the Rev. John Jones, and Bp. Hall’s Works.

⁷ Ps. xxx. 5.



ARCHBISHOP USHER.

DIED 1655-6. AGED 76.

JAMES USHER was the pious and learned archbishop of Armagh. About the middle of February, 1655, he went to the Priory at Ryegate, the seat of his patron, the Countess of Peterborough, taking his last leave of his friends and relations, who never had the happiness to see him again. He was now very aged, and though both his body and mind were healthy and vigorous for a man of his years; yet his eyesight was extremely decayed by his constant studying, so that he could scarce see to write, but at a window, and that in the sunshine, which he constantly followed in clear days from one window to another. He had now frequent thoughts of his dissolution; and as he was wont every year to note in his almanack, over against the day of his birth the year of his age, so in this year 1655, this note was found written with his own hand, "Now aged 75 years, my days are full." And presently after in capital letters, "**RESIGNATION**;" from which we may gather, that he

now thought the days of his pilgrimage to be fulfilled, and that he now resigned up himself to God's will and pleasure.

Not long before his death, going to Ryegate, I (writes the narrator) preached a sermon there where this good bishop was present: after church he was pleased to confer with me in private (as it was usual with him so to do), and he spake to this effect: "I thank you for your sermon. I am going out of this world, and I now desire according to your text, (Col. iii. 12,) to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, and to be with Him in heaven, of which," said he, "we ought not to doubt, if we can evidence to ourselves our conversion, true faith, and charity, and live in the exercise of those true graces and virtues with perseverance; mortifying daily our inbred corruptions, renouncing all ungodliness and worldly lusts; and he that is arrived at this habitual frame and holy course of life is the blessed and happy man, and may rejoice in hope of a glorious eternity in the kingdom of heaven, to receive that inheritance given by God to those that are sanctified."

So that all his discourse was of heavenly things, as if his better part had been there already, freed from the body and all terrene affections; and he seemed as if he were seriously considering his spiritual state, and making ready for his departure, which he now shortly expected. But since it had been usual with him to insist on things of this nature when we were together, and that he was at this time in health, I did not believe that his change was so near as he presaged; yet he himself had other thoughts, and it proved that he was not mistaken, for on the 20th March, (the day he fell sick,) after he had

been most part of it, as long as he had light, at his study, he went from thence to visit a gentlewoman then sick in the house, giving her most excellent preparatives for death, together with other holy advice, for almost an hour, and that in such a heavenly manner, as if, like Moses upon Mount Pisgah, he had then a prospect of the celestial Canaan.

Next morning early he complained of a great pain in his side; a physician being sent for, prescribed what he thought convenient in the case, but it could not thereby be removed, but rather increased more and more upon him, which he bore with great patience for thirteen or fourteen hours, but his strength and spirits decaying, he wholly applied himself to prayer, and therein had the assistance of the Countess's chaplain. Upon some abatement of the torture, he advised those about him to provide for death in the time of health, that then they might have nothing else to do but to die. Then taking his leave of the Countess of Peterborough, by whom he had been so long and kindly entertained; and giving her thanks for all her kindness to him, with excellent spiritual counsel as a return for all her favours; he desired to be left to his own private devotions. After which, the last words he was heard to utter, (about one o'clock in the afternoon) praying for forgiveness of sins, were these, viz. "O Lord forgive me, especially my sins of omission." So presently after this, in sure hopes of a glorious immortality, he fell asleep, to the great grief and affliction of the said countess, who could never sufficiently lament her own and the Church's great loss, by his too sudden departure out of this life.

Thus died this humble and holy man, praying for his sins of omission, who was never known to

omit his duty, or scarce to have let any time slip wherein he was not employed in some good action or other^s.

REFLECTION 1st.—If such a pious and learned man thought justly that he had so much for which to implore pardon, what an awful account have they to render who scarcely bestow any of their time as they ought to do.

2nd. There is no state of mind more frequently to be observed in sickness, nor any more carefully to be guarded against, than that of the Pharisee, who said, “God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are.” Whereas, if we looked, as did Archbishop Usher, to our “sins of omission,” without going even any further in the work of self-examination, we should see enough to humble our notions of self-righteousness, to show the need of a deep repentance, and to constrain us to seek pardon through the merits of Christ Jesus.

^s Life of Archbishop Usher, by Richard Parr, D.D. Fol. 1686.



HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.

DIED 1660. AGED 55.

DR. HENRY HAMMOND'S Commentary on the New Testament is much valued by every scholar in divinity. Dr. Hammond was also eminent for his zeal and piety. At the approach of sickness his first consideration was, what failing had provoked the present chastisement, and to that purpose he made his earnest prayer to God (and enjoined his friends to do the like), to convince him of it; not only so, but to tear and rend away, though by the greatest violence and sharpest discipline, whatever was displeasing in his eyes, and grant not only patience, but fruitfulness under the rod. Then by repeated acts of submission would he deliver himself up into God's hands to do with him as seemed Him good, and saying, "God's holy will be done." And even then when on the rack of torture, would he be observing every circumstance of allay, saying it was not so sharp as others felt, accusing his impatience that it appeared so bad to him as it did. And then when some degree of health was given, he exerted all his strength in a return of grateful

recognition to the Author of it, which he performed with a lively sense and cheerful piety, frequently reflecting on the Psalmist's phrase, that it was a joyful thing to be thankful. Whoever should attentively observe this his transport, would easily apprehend how possible it was for the infinite fruitions of another world to be made up by the perpetual act of grateful recognition, in giving lauds and singing praises unto God. Upon this score he was a most diligent observer of every blessing he received, and had them still in readiness to confront unto those pressures he at any time lay under. In the intermissions of his importunate maladies he would with full acknowledgment mention the great indulgence, that he who had in his constitution the cause of so much pain still dwelling with him, should yet by God's immediate interposing be rescued from the effect.

To facilitate yet more this his serenity and calm of mind, he laid this rule before him, which proved of great use, "never to trouble himself with the foresight of future events," being resolved of our Saviour's maxim, that "sufficient to the day is the evil thereof:" and that it were the greatest folly in the world to perplex oneself with that which perchance will never come to pass; but if it should, then God who sent it will dispose it to the best; most certainly to his glory, which should satisfy us in our respects to Him; and, unless it should be our fault, as certainly to our good, which, if we be not strangely unreasonable, must satisfy in reference unto ourselves and private interests. Besides all this, in the very dispensation, God will not fail to give such allays, which (like the cool gales under the line), will make the greatest heats of sufferance very supportable.

And to enforce all this, he made a constant recourse to the experience of God's dealing with him in preceding accidents, which, however dreadful at a distance, at a nearer view lost much of their terror. And for others that he saw perplexed about the management of their difficult affairs, he was wont to ask them, "When they would begin to trust God, or permit Him to govern the world?" Besides, unto himself and friends he was wont solemnly to give this mandate, "to rather nothing:" not only to be content, or acquiesce, but be resolved the present state to be the very best that could be wished or fancied.

And thus all private concernments he passed over with perfect indifference; the world and its appendages hanging so loose about him, that he never took notice when any part dropped off, or sat uneasily. Herein indeed he was concerned, and rendered thoughtful, if somewhat intervened that had a possibility of duty appendent to it; in which case he would be solicitous to discern where the obligation lay; but presently rescued himself from that disquiet by his addresses unto God in prayer and fasting, which was his certain refuge in this as well as other exigents, and if the thing in question were of moment, he called in the devotions of his friends. Besides his earnest prayers to God for his assistance, and disposal of him entirely to his glory, and a diligent survey of his inclinations, and therein those which were his more open and less defensible parts, he farther called in and solemnly adjured that friend of his with whom he had then the nearest opportunity of communion, to study and examine the last ten years of his life, and with the justice due to a Christian friendship, to observe the failures of all kinds, and show them to him. The diocese of Worcester,

was, by the favour of his majesty, Charles II., designed as the charge of Dr. Hammond, and he expected hourly the peremptory mandate which was to call him forth from his beloved retirements.

But, in the instant, a more importunate, though infinitely more welcome summons engaged him on his last journey: for on the 4th of April, he was seized with a sharp illness, which yet ceased for that time. However, on the 8th of the same month, it returned again with greater violence. When, as if he had by some instinct a certain knowledge of the issue of his sickness, he almost at its first approach conceived himself in hazard, telling his friends with whom he was, "that he should leave them in God's hands, who could supply abundantly all the assistance they could either expect or desire from Him, and who would so provide, that they should not find his removal any loss." And when he observed one of them with some earnestness pray for his health and continuance, he, with tender passion, replied, "I observe your zeal spend itself all in that one petition for my recovery, in the interim you have no care of me in my greatest interest, which is, that I may be perfectly fitted for my change, when God shall call me; I pray, let some of your fervour be employed that way." And being pressed to make his own request to God to be continued longer in the world, to the service of the Church, he immediately began a solemn prayer, which contained first a very humble and melting acknowledgment of sin, and a most earnest intercession for mercy and forgiveness through the merits of his Saviour: next resigning himself entirely into his Maker's hands, he begged that if the divine wisdom intended him for death, he might have a due preparation for it; but if his

life might in any degree be useful to the Church, even to one single soul, he then besought Almighty God to continue him, and by his grace enable him to employ that life he so vouchsafed industriously and successfully.

After this he did, with great affection, intercede for this Church and nation, and with particular vigour and enforcement prayed for sincere performance of Christian duty, now so much decayed, to the equal supplanting and scandal of that holy calling; that those who professed that faith might live according to the rules of it, and to the form of godliness superadd the power. This, with some repetitions and more tears, he pursued, and at last closed all in a prayer for the several concerns of the family where he was. With this he frequently blessed God for so far indulging to his infirmity, as to make his disease so painless to him; withal to send it to him before he took his journey, whereas it might have taken him in the way, or at his inn, with far greater disadvantages. As to the forms of devotion appropriate to his extremity, he took care they should not exclude the public ones, but still gave these a constant place; and when in his sharp agonies his friends betook themselves to their extemporary ejaculations, he composed those irregularities by saying, "Let us call on God in the voice of his Church." He now became strangely cheerful, and overlooked the encroaching importunate tyranny of sickness.

On the 20th of April, being Good Friday, he solemnly received the Sacrament, and again on the 22nd of April, which then was Easter-day. Amidst his weakness and indisposition of all parts, in the act of celebration his devotion not only was not faint, but most intent and vigorous; yet was it equalled by his infinite humility, which discovered

itself as in his deportment, so particularly in that his pathological ejaculation which broke forth at the hearing of those words of the Apostle, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" unto which he rejoined, in an accent that neither intended a compliment to God, nor men, to either of which he was not under a temptation, "of whom I am the chief."

When he was in pain he often prayed for patience, and while he did so, evidenced that his prayer was heard; for he exercised not only that, but thankfulness too, in his greatest extremity crying out, "Blessed be God! blessed be God!" Nor did he, according to the usual method, inflict his sickness upon those about him, by peevishness disquieting his attendants; but was pleased with every thing that was done, and liked every thing that was brought, condescending to all proposals, and obeying with all readiness every advice of his physicians. In his own greatest desolations he administered reliefs to those about him, mixing advices with his prayers, and twisting the tenderness of a friend to that of the Christian. He then dispensed his best of legacies, his blessings; most passionately exhorting the young growing hopes of his family, whose first innocence and bashful shame of doing ill he above all things laboured to have preserved, "To be just to the advantage of their education, and maintain inviolate their first baptismal vows." Then he more generally commended unto all the great advantage of mutual friendly admonitions. On which occasion, when one asked him what more special rule he would recommend for the whole life, he briefly replied, "Uniform obedience:" whereby (if we may take a comment from himself at other times) he meant, not only a sincere reception of duty as

such, because commanded, and not because it is this or that, pleasant or honourable, or perchance cheap or easy duty; but withal the very condition of obeying, the lot of not being to choose for one's-self, the being determined in all proposals by human or divine command, and where those were left at large, by the guidance of God's providence, or the assistance of a friend.

But amidst these most Christian occupations, these happiest anodynes of sickness, the 25th of April fatally drew on. About three o'clock in the afternoon, becoming very weak and dispirited, and cold in his extreme parts, he had strength only continued to persevere in his devotions, which he did unto the last moment of his life, a few minutes before his death breathing out those words which best became his Christian life, "Lord, make haste."

On the morrow in the evening, the 26th day of the same month, he was, according to his desire, without ostentation or pomp, though with all becoming decency, buried at the neighbouring church of Hampton, with the whole office and usual rites of the Church of England; several of the gentry and clergy of the county, and affectionate multitudes of persons of less quality attending on his obsequies, the clergy with ambition offering themselves to bear him on their shoulders; which accordingly they did, and laid that sacred burden in the burial place of the generous family which with such friendship had entertained him when alive: where now he rests in peace, and full assurance of a glorious resurrection.

They that had the happiness of a personal acquaintance with this best of men, this saint, who seems in our decays of ancient virtue lent us by special providence even for this end and purpose,

that we might not disbelieve the faith of history delivering the excellency of primitive Christians, know with what thirst and eagerness of soul he sought the spiritual advantage of any single man, how humble soever, with what enjoyment he beheld the recovery of any such from an evil course and habit. And whatever apprehensions other men may have, they will be easily induced to think, that if blessed spirits have commerce with earth (as surely we have reason to believe it somewhat more than possible), they, I say, will consider it a connatural and highly agreeable accession unto his fruitions, that when there is joy in the presence of the angels of God for a sinner that repents, he may be an immediate accessory to that blessed triumph, and be concerned beyond the rate of a mere spectator.

Persuasions to piety now-a-days are usually in scorn called preaching : but it is to be hoped that this, how contemned an office soever it be grown, will not be without its use in this instance ; that it will not be without its benefit, if his history, who deservedly was reckoned among the best of preachers, whose life was the best of sermons, should bear a correspondence to its subject, and professedly close with an application. This example exhorts all persons to be what they promised God Almighty they would be in their baptismal vows, what they see the glorious saints and martyrs and confessors, and, in particular, this holy man has been before them ; that they be what is most honourable, most easy and advantageous to be at present ; and in a word, to render themselves such as they desire to be upon their deathbeds, before they leave the world, and then would wish to be for ever.

Which blessed work, as it was the great design

of this excellent doctor, both in words and writings, his thoughts and actions, is also the only aim of this imperfect, but yet affectionate and well meant account; and may Almighty God, by the assistance of his grace, give all of these things their most earnestly desired effect and issue⁹!

NARRATIVE.—When a gentleman of no very laudable life had in his sickness desired to speak with Doctor Hammond, which message, through the negligence of the person employed, was not delivered, till he that sent it was in the last agonies of death; the Doctor was very much affected at it, complaining of those that had so little sense of a soul in that sad state; and pouring out his most fervent prayers in his behalf, requested farther, that by this example others, and in particular the companions of that unhappy person's vice, might learn how improper a season the time of sickness, and how unfit a place the death-bed is, for that one great work of penitence, which was intended by Almighty God the one commensurate work of the whole life¹.

REFLECTION BY DR. HENRY HAMMOND.—It is the supreme privilege of Christianity to convert the saddest evils into the most medicinal advantages, the valley of Achor into the door of hope, the blackest tempest into the most perfect and fair sky.

⁹ Life of Hammond, by Dean Fell, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

¹ Dean Fell.



BISHOP SANDERSON.

DIED 1662. AGED 65.

DR. ROBERT SANDERSON was an eminent scholar and divine. He was appointed chaplain to King Charles I. and afterwards made Bishop of Lincoln. About three weeks before his death, finding his strength to decay, by reason of his constant infirmity, and a consumptive cough added to it, he retired to his chamber, expressing a desire to enjoy his last thoughts to himself in private, without disturbance or care, especially of what might concern this world. Thus as his natural life decayed his spiritual life seemed more strong, and his faith more confirmed; still labouring to attain that holiness and purity, without which none shall see God.

In this time of retirement, which was wholly spent in devotion, he longed for his dissolution, and when some that loved him prayed for his recovery, if he at any time found an amendment, he seemed to be displeased, by saying, "his friends said their prayers backwards for him." He rejoiced much that he had so lived, as never to cause an hour's

sorrow to his good father, and that he hoped he should die without an enemy.

He, in this retirement, had the Church prayers read in his chamber twice every day; and at nine at night some prayers read to him, and a part of his family, out of "The Whole Duty of Man."

The day before he took his bed, (which was three days before his death), he, that he might receive a new assurance for the pardon of his sins past, and be strengthened in his way to the new Jerusalem, took the blessed sacrament of the body and blood of his and our blessed Jesus, from the hands of his chaplain, Mr. Pullen, accompanied with his wife, children, and a friend, in as awful, humble, and ardent a manner as outward reverence could express. After the praise and thanksgiving for this blessing was ended, he spake to this purpose; "I have now, to the great joy of my soul, tasted of the all-saving sacrifice of my Saviour's death and passion; and with it received a spiritual assurance that my sins past are pardoned, and my God is at peace with me: and that I shall never have a will or power to do any thing that may separate my soul from the love of my dear Saviour. Lord! confirm this belief in me, and make me still to remember, that it is Thou, O God, that tookest me out of my mother's womb, and hast been the powerful protector of me to this present moment of my life: thou hast neither forsaken me now I am become greyheaded, nor suffered me to forsake Thee in the late days of temptation, and sacrifice my conscience for the preservation of my liberty or estate. It was not of myself, but grace, that I have stood when others have fallen under my trials, and these mercies I now remember with joy and thankfulness; and my hope and desire is, that

I may die remembering this; and praising Thee my merciful God."

After this, taking his bed, and about a day before his death, he desired his chaplain, Mr. Pullen, to give him absolution: and at his performing that office, he pulled off his cap, that Mr. Pullen might lay his hand upon his bare head. After this desire of his was satisfied, his body seemed to be more at ease, and his mind more cheerful; and he said often, "Lord, forsake me not now my strength faileth me, but continue thy mercy, and let my mouth be ever filled with thy praise."

He continued the remaining night and day very patient and thankful for any of the little offices that were performed for his ease and refreshment; and during that time did often say to himself the 103rd Psalm, (a psalm that is composed of praise and consolation fitted for a dying soul,) and say also to himself these words, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed where true joy is to be found." And now his thoughts seemed to be wholly of death, for which he was so prepared, that the King of Terrors could not surprise him as a thief in the night, for he had often said, "he was prepared and longed for it." And as this desire seemed to come from heaven, so it left him not till his soul ascended to that region of blessed spirits, whose employments are to join in concert with his, and sing praise and glory to that God who hath brought him and them to that place into which sin and sorrow cannot enter.

Thus this pattern of meekness changed this for a better life: it is now too late that mine may be like his (for I am in the 85th year of my age, and God knows that it hath not), but I most humbly beseech Almighty God that my death may; and

I do as earnestly beg, that if any reader shall receive any satisfaction from this very plain, and as true relation, he will be so charitable as to say, "Amen".

REFLECTION.—The higher a Christian ascends above this sinful world, the more that religion prevails within, the more evidently shall he then find himself in a clear heaven, in a region that is calm and serene, and the more will those dark affections of fear and despair vanish away, and those clear and bright affections of love and joy, of hope and peace, break forth in strength and lustre upon the soul.



PETER HEYLYN, D.D.

DIED 1663. AGED 62.

HE was a divine of some reputation as a scholar and a man of genius, a Fellow of Magdalen Col-

² Life of Dr. Robert Sanderson, by Izaak Walton, in Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog., vol. iv.

lege, Oxford, one of the chaplains to King Charles the First, and subdean of Westminster.

In his sickness, he most zealously glorified God's name with praises and thanksgivings for his mercies towards himself and family, earnestly praying for them, and often commending them to God's heavenly care and protection; at the same time he left a little book of prayers for Mrs. Heylyn's devotions, being a selection of many Collects out of the Common Prayer, to every one of which he had added a most fervent prayer of his own composition. "That little book," she said, "should be the prayer-book of her devotion while she lived." Finally, as his time grew shorter and shorter, he prayed with more vehemency of spirit, rejoicing exceedingly that he should live to Ascension-day, uttering forth most heavenly expressions to the sweet comfort of others, and principally of his own soul, with a full assurance of his salvation through Christ Jesus. At which time his soul, now ready to depart, and be with Christ his Saviour, he presently called to his bedside Mr. Merrol, a verger of the church, who had come into his chamber to see him, and said to him, "I know it is church time with you, and I know this is Ascension-day; I am ascending to the Church triumphant: I go to my God and Saviour, unto joys celestial, and to hallelujahs eternal;" with which and other like expressions he died upon Holy Thursday, A.D. 1663³.

REFLECTION AND CONSOLATION.—"For this cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by

³ Life of Peter Heylyn, D.D., Subdean of Westminster, by Dr. Barnard, Rector of Waddington, p. 290.

day: for our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ‘.”



BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR.

DIED 1667. AGED 56.

At the Restoration he succeeded Bishop Lesley in the see of Down and Connor. In zeal, devotion, eloquence, and learning, Dr. Jeremy Taylor was an ornament to the Church. At the close of life the bishop began a discourse on the beatitudes; but he, who with such moving accents had forewarned the world of the incessant march of death, by the uncertainty of life was now to ratify his word by his own example. Thus engaged, whilst his mind was intent upon those gracious words of his Saviour, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” he was summoned to practise his own advice; “Say no more, but when

⁴ 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17.

God calls, lay aside thy papers, and first dress thy soul, and then dress thy hearse."

On the 3rd of August, in the year 1667, at the age of fifty-six, he was attacked by a fever, which, after continuing ten days, put a period to his exemplary life, and deprived the world of one of the brightest ornaments it then possessed. He died at Lisburn, on the thirteenth of the same month ⁴.

The following are some of Bishop Taylor's REFLECTIONS on Death, selected from his writings:

1. To a good man there are very many more reasons to be afraid of life than of death: this having less of evil, and more of advantage.

2. It is certain that he that is afraid of death, I mean with a violent and transporting fear, with a fear apt to discompose his duty or his patience, that man either loves this world too much, or dares not trust God for the next.

3. It remains that we who are alive should so live, and by the actions of religion attend to the coming of the day of the Lord, that we neither be surprised, nor leave our duties imperfect, nor our sins uncanceled, nor our persons unreconciled, nor God unappeased; but that when we descend to our graves, we may rest in the bosom of the Lord, till the mansions be prepared, "not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

A Prayer, by Jeremy Taylor, for Submission to the will of God in the hour of Sickness.

O Thou who art the God of patience and consolation, strengthen me in the inner man, that I may bear the yoke and burthen of the Lord,

⁴ Bonney's Life of Jeremy Taylor; Chalmers's Biog. Dict.

without any uneasy and useless murmurs and ineffective unwillingness. O holy Jesus! be Thou pleased to ease this load, by fortifying my spirit, that I may be strongest when I am weakest, and may be able to do and suffer every thing Thou pleasest. And at last I will lie down and die, and by Thy mercies, and intercession of the holy Jesus, and the conduct of Thy Blessed Spirit, and the ministry of angels, pass into those mansions, where holy souls rest and weep no more.



SIR MATTHEW HALE.

DIED 1676. AGED 67.

SIR MATTHEW HALE, lord chief-justice of England, was not more eminent for his station than for his learning and piety. He resigned his office the 15th February, 1675-6, and lived till the Christmas following. But all the while he was in so ill a state of health, that there was no hope of his recovery, he still continued to retire often, both for his devotions and studies; and, as long as he could

go, went constantly to his closet; and when his infirmities increased, so that he was not able to go thither himself, he made his servants carry him thither in a chair. At last, as the winter came on, he saw with great joy his deliverance approaching; for besides his being weary of the world, and his longings for the blessedness of another state, his pains increased so on him, that no patience inferior to his could have borne them without a great uneasiness of mind; yet he expressed to the last such submission to the will of God, and so equal a temper under them, that it was visible then what mighty effects his philosophy and Christianity had on him, in supporting him under such a heavy load. He could not lie down in bed above a year before his death, by reason of the asthma, but sat rather than lay in it.

He was attended in his sickness by a pious and worthy divine, Mr. Evan Griffith, Minister of the parish; and it was observed, that in all the extremities of his pain, whenever he prayed by him, he forbore all complaints or groans, but with his hands and eyes lifted up, was fixed in his devotions. Not long before his death the Minister told him, "there was to be a sacrament next day at church, but he believed he could not come and partake with the rest, therefore he would give it him in his own house." But he answered, "No; his heavenly Father had prepared a feast for him, and he would go to his Father's house and partake of it." So he made himself be carried thither in his chair, where he received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on his knees with great devotion; which it may be supposed was the greater, because he apprehended it was to be his last. He had some secret unaccountable presages of his death; for he said, that "if he

did not die on such a day, (which fell to be the 25th of November,) he believed he should live a month longer ;” and he died that very day month, on Christmas-day. On the anniversary of Christ’s advent, this good man usually wrote some verses of joy, in commemoration of so great an event, as a kind of tribute to his Saviour. The one which Bishop Burnet supposes was the last Sir Matthew wrote, contains, singularly, these words of Simeon.

And now thou hast fulfilled it, blessed Lord,
Dismiss me now according to thy word ;
And let my aged body now return
To rest and dust, and drop into an urn.
For I have liv’d enough, mine eyes have seen
Thy much desir’d salvation ;
Let this sight close mine eyes ; ’tis loss to see
After this vision any sight but Thee.

He continued to enjoy the free use of his reason and senses to the last moment, which he had often and earnestly prayed for during his sickness : and when his voice was so sunk that he could not be heard, they perceived by the almost constant lifting up of his eyes and hands, that he was still aspiring towards that blessed state, of which he was now speedily to be possessed. Between two and three in the afternoon of Christmas-day, he breathed out his righteous and pious soul.—His end was peace⁶.

Instead of a Precept I will here add a useful Narrative.—Bishop Burnet tells us that Sir Matthew Hale, having lost one of his sons, the manner of whose death had some grievous circumstances in it, to one coming to see him and condole, he said, “Those were the effects of living long; such

⁶ Bishop Burnet’s Life of Sir Matthew Hale, in Wordsworth’s Eccl. Biog., vol. iv.

must look to see many sad and unacceptable things," and having said that, he went to other discourses, with his ordinary freedom of mind ; for though he had a temper so tender, that sad things were apt enough to make deep impressions upon him, yet the regard he had to the wisdom and providence of God, and the just estimate he made of external things, did to admiration maintain the tranquillity of his mind, and he gave no occasion, by idleness, to melancholy, to corrupt his spirit, but by the perpetual bent of his thoughts, he knew well how to divert them from being oppressed with the excesses of sorrow.



REV BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE, D.D.

DIED 1683. AGED 73.

DR. WHICHCOTE was provost of King's College, Cambridge, and afterwards incumbent of St. Lawrence Jewry, London. A little before Easter, in 1683, he went down to Cambridge ; where, upon taking a severe cold, he fell into a distemper, which

in a few days put a period to his life. He died in the house of his ancient and learned friend, Dr. Cudworth, Master of Christ's College, and was interred in the church of St. Lawrence Jewry.

During his sickness he had a constant calmness and serenity of mind; and under all his bodily weakness possessed his soul in great patience. After the prayers for the visitation of the sick, which he said were excellent prayers, had been used, he was put in mind of receiving the Sacrament; to which he answered, that he most readily embraced the proposal: and after he had received it, said to Dr. Cudworth, "I heartily thank you for this most Christian office: I thank you for putting me in mind of receiving this Sacrament;" adding this pious ejaculation, "The Lord fulfil all his declarations and promises, and pardon all my weaknesses and imperfections." He disclaimed all merit in himself, and declared that whatever he was, he was through the grace and goodness of God in Jesus Christ. He expressed likewise great dislike of the principles of separation, and said he was the more desirous to receive the Sacrament, that he might declare his full communion with the Church of Christ all the world over. He thanked God that he had no pain in his body, nor disquiet in his mind.

Towards the last he seemed rather unwilling to be detained any longer in this state; not for any pains he felt in himself, but for the trouble he gave his friends: saying to one of them who had with great care attended him all along in his sickness, "My dear friend, thou hast taken a great deal of pains to uphold a crazy body, but it will not do: I pray thee give me no more cordials; for why shouldest thou keep me any longer out of that happy state to which I am going? I thank

God I hope in his mercy, that it shall be well with me."

And herein God was pleased particularly to answer those devout and well-weighed petitions of his, which he frequently used in his prayer before sermon, which, says Archbishop Tillotson, "I shall set down in his own words, and I doubt not those that were his constant hearers do well remember them. 'And superadd this, O Lord, to all the grace and favour which thou hast shown us all along in life, not to remove us hence but for all advantage of eternity, when we shall be in a due preparation of mind, in a holy constitution of soul, in a perfect renunciation of the guise of this mad and sinful world, when we shall be entirely resigned up to Thee, when we shall have clear acts of faith in God by Jesus Christ, high and reverential thoughts of Thee in our minds, enlarged and inflamed affections towards Thee, &c. and whensoever we shall come to leave this world, which will be when Thou shalt appoint, (for the issues of life and death are in thy hand,) afford us such a mighty power and presence of thy good Spirit, that we may have solid consolation in believing, and avoid all consternation of mind, all doubt and uncertainty concerning our everlasting condition, and at length depart in the faith of God's elect','" &c.

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON'S REFLECTION.—
"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Let his virtues live in our memory, and his example in our lives. Let us endeavour to be what he was, and we shall one day be what he now is—of blessed memory on earth, and happy for ever in heaven.

⁷ Archbishop Tillotson's Funeral Sermon on the Rev. Dr. Whichcote, vol. i. fol. 1735.



WILLIAM, LORD RUSSELL.

DIED 1683. AGED 42.

THE political circumstances which led to the untimely end of this nobleman, belong to the province of the historian. Our duty is to consider the example as affording one of the noblest instances on record of the sustaining power of religion at the close of life, and under the most trying circumstances.

The Friday before his death being the day he had fixed for receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, he determined to pass that day as he would have done the Sunday, had he lived so long. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was given him early in the morning (his servant receiving it with him), by Dr. Tillotson, the dean of Canterbury. It appears that, in the course of his interview, the dean asked him, if he believed all the articles of the Christian religion, as taught by the Church of England? He answered, "Yes, truly." Then he asked him if he forgave all persons? "That," he said, "he did

from his heart." Then the dean said he hoped he would discharge his conscience in full and free confession. He said that he had done it. He told Dr. Burnet he could not pretend to such high joys and longings as Dr. Burton had spoken of, but on an entire resignation of himself to the will of God, and a perfect serenity of mind.

A little before he went to his supper, he said to Lady Russell, "Stay and sup with me; let us eat our last earthly food together." He mentioned several passages of dying men with great freedom of spirit. To Dr. Burnet he spoke of his own situation, and said how great a change death made, and how wonderfully those new scenes would strike on a soul. He had heard how some that had been born blind, were struck, when by the couching of their cataracts, they saw; but what, he said, if the first thing they saw were the sun rising? He prayed several times with Dr. Burnet, and afterwards with Dean Tillotson, and at intervals went into his chamber and prayed by himself. Once he came out, and said he had been much inspired in his last prayer, and wished he could have written it down and sent it to his wife. He gave Dr. Burnet several commissions to his relations, but none more earnest than to one of them, against all revenge for what had been done to himself; he told Dr. Burnet he was to give him his watch, and as he wound it up he said, "I have done with time; now eternity comes."

He pressed Lord Cavendish anxiously to apply himself more to religion, and told him what great comfort and support he felt from it, now in his extremity. Such was his last advice and farewell to his dearest friend. He sung within himself,

and Dr. Burnet asking him what he was singing, he said, "It was the hundred and nineteenth Psalm, but he should sing better very soon." His concluding remarks were, "I have now done with this world, and am going to a better; I forgive all the world heartily, and I thank God I die in charity with all men; and I wish all sincere Protestants may love one another, and not make way for popery by their animosities. I pray God forgive them, and continue the Protestant religion among them, that it may flourish so long as the sun and moon endure. I am now more satisfied to die than ever I have been^s."

OBSERVATION BY DR. BURNET.—"His whole behaviour looked like a triumph over death."



ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

DIED 1684. AGED 74.

DR. ROBERT LEIGHTON, Archbishop of Glasgow, was eminent for his personal piety and devotional writings. One instance connected with his death

^s Life of William, Lord Russell, by Lord John Russell vol. ii.

ought not to be unnoticed. He had often said, that if he were to choose a place to die in, it should be an Inn. In such a place he thought that a Christian believer might properly finish his pilgrimage; the whole world being to him but a large and noisy Inn, and he a wayfarer, tarrying in it as short a time as possible, and then hasting away to his father's house. This wish was gratified, for he breathed his last in the Bell Inn, Warwick Lane, London. Bishop Burnet and others attended him constantly during his illness, and witnessed his tranquil departure*.

REFLECTIONS on Time and Eternity, by Archbishop Leighton:—1. Be mindful, therefore, of your better part, and accustom it to think of its own eternity; always and every where having its eyes fixed upon that world to which it is most nearly related. And thus it will look down, as from on high, on all those things which the world considers as lofty and exalted, and will see them under its feet; and of all the things which are confined within the narrow verge of this present life, it will have nothing to desire and nothing to fear. 2. What, either in life or in death, can he be afraid of, “whose life is hid with Christ in God;” and of whom it may be justly said, without exaggeration, “If the world should be crushed and broken to pieces, he would be undaunted, even while the ruins fell upon his head?” Read the five first verses of the 46th Psalm.

* Dr. Burnet's Lives and Characters, by Dr. Jebb.



BISHOP THOMAS.

DIED 1689. AGED 76.

DR. WILLIAM THOMAS, Bishop of Worcester, was one of the prelates who declined taking the oaths of allegiance to King William and Queen Mary. The limited time for taking the oaths drawing near, it became necessary for him to settle his plans for vacating the see of Worcester.

While he was preparing to leave the palace, and retire from his diocese, God was pleased to prepare better things for him; for about the 20th June, he grew continually weaker and weaker, though his friends did not think him in any immediate danger. The bishop however perceived himself to be decaying, and on Sunday the 23rd received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in his own Chapel. On Monday all his servants were called in, and he gave every one of them his blessing. That night he endeavoured to sleep, but in vain; his daughter-in-law sat up with him: she was much edified by him; the most part of that restless night he spent in ejaculations and prayers to

God, that He would be pleased to release him from his miseries and the troubles of this vain world: there was no weight or clog on his conscience; death did not appear at all troublesome to him; the sting was gone: his earnest desire was to depart and be with Christ.

Thus he passed the few remaining hours of his life, being sensible to the last, but growing still weaker and weaker. About three o'clock the next day, being the 25th, he patiently submitted to the stroke of death, and resigned his spirit into the hands of God who gave it¹.

REFLECTION.—Let every Christian so order his temporal affairs that in the hour of sickness he may not be distracted by worldly cares. Let him be enabled to attend wholly to the concerns of religion, and antedate his conversation in heaven, holding intercourse, by prayer, with God, and communion with Christ and the Holy Spirit.

¹ Chalmers's Biog. Dict. &c.



ARCHBISHOP SANCROFT.

DIED 1693. AGED 76.

DR. WILLIAM SANCROFT, Archbishop of Canterbury, was a prelate eminent for piety and learning. The account which we fortunately possess of the circumstances attending his last sickness, and his behaviour under them, exhibits a most pleasing picture of the piety and many virtues which adorned his mind. We behold in him an instance, such as has not often been preserved on record, of a soul, not exempt indeed from all human weakness, but elevated to a noble height of true Christian heroism, duly prepared by habit and reflection for the approach of death; humbly yet firmly resigned under all the dispensations of Providence, and cheered in the last extremity by a meek and animating faith.

During the whole course of his languishing sickness, we are told by those who had the nearest access to him, there was not the least appearance of disturbance or discomposure; but the same meekness of spirit which had always composed his passions under former dispensations now came

to his support; and indeed in this last extremity of life appeared more bright and eminent. At one time, when he had shown his physician his wasted and shrivelled legs and thighs, destitute of all flesh and moisture, he said, "And can these dry bones live?" We are told by one who was present with him during the last days of his life, that he was not only contented and willing to die, but that he breathed with ardency after his release from life, still with the most humble resignation to the will of God. He used to express the sense of his heart in these words of the Psalmist, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him; I will lay my mouth in the dust." In his greatest extremities and agonies he was wont to set before himself the great example of our Saviour; for he would say, "As a lamb carried to the slaughter he was dumb, and opened not his mouth." Those eminent virtues of humility and patience, of trust and affiance in God, of universal charity and good will to men, which by the long practice of his life had become habitual and familiar to him, displayed themselves most eminently at this critical season. "We beheld," it is added, "the graces of his life triumphing over the decays of nature, and becoming both the support and the crown of his death-bed." All which most plainly teaches us, how necessary it is to gain a habit of virtue in the days of our health, that we may not have to seek it at that season when we have the greatest occasion for its use.

The piety of his soul, which was always quick and active, cast a holy light upon the gloom of his death-bed scene. It was surprising to behold, in the perfect failure of all bodily supports, what presence of mind he would summon unto his assistance under the affliction which lay before him, with what

wonderful dexterity and readiness he would alleviate his sufferings by pious and suitable ejaculations, taken out of the Scriptures, or breathed forth from his own pious soul. Whenever a sharp pain, or a dejection of spirits, such as was incidental to the sickness under which he laboured, approached him, he was ever ready to meet it, by uttering some divine sentence, or some holy prayer. That which came nearest to a complaint, was only a description of his wasting condition, in these pious words, "Thy hand is heavy upon me day and night; my moisture is like the drought in summer." But even this was joined with a feeling of firm reliance on the providence of God: "For," said he, "I am low, but must be brought lower yet, even to the dust of death; but though he kill me, yet will I trust in him."

We saw at this period, proceeds the narrator of his last illness, his ardent charity both extended and limited, according to the Apostle's direction, "to all, but especially to them of the household of faith." His suffering brethren were the principal objects of his charity and prayers, but not exclusive of others; for upon the frequent returns of exercises of his devotions, he suited his prayers to the general needs of men, and recommended all his brethren to the Divine mercy. In short, if he had any enemies, they were included in his prayers: in particular, a short time before his last hour, after solemnly praying for a blessing on his family, relations, and friends, he earnestly implored forgiveness for his enemies, as he desired it of God for himself.

As he drew near his end, he repeated to those who stood around him his protestations of the sincerity with which he had acted. He told them that his profession was real and conscientious, and

not proceeding from any sinister ends; that he had the very same thoughts of the present state of affairs which he had at first, and that if the same thing were to be acted over again, he would quit all that he had in this world, rather than violate his conscience.

His memory and intellects continued perfect to the last moment. His bodily faculties remained so too to a singular degree. A very short time before he breathed his last he called for a Common Prayer Book, and though one was brought to him of the smallest print, he himself turned to the commendatory prayer, and ordered it to be read. That being performed, he composed himself more solemnly for his departure. He put his hands and arms down to both his sides, and desired his head to be placed lower; thus, in a manner, laying himself out to receive the stroke of death. In this posture, with the utmost cheerfulness and resignation of spirit, he breathed his last, a little after midnight, on the morning of Friday, November 24, 1693¹.

PRECEPT.—“We should patiently, and with thanksgiving, bear our heavenly Father’s correction, whensoever by any manner of adversity it shall please his gracious goodness to visit us. And there should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses. For he himself went not up to joy, but first he suffered pain; he entered not into his glory, before he was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy, is to suffer here with Christ; and

¹ Life of William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, by G. D’Oyly, D.D., vol. ii.

our door to enter into eternal life, is gladly to die with Christ; that we may rise again from death, and dwell with him in everlasting life¹."



QUEEN MARY II.

DIED 1694. AGED 32.

THIS Queen Mary was daughter of James II., consort of King William III., and a pattern of piety, good sense, and conjugal affection. In all the pleasures of life she maintained a true indifference as to the continuation of them, and she seemed to think of parting with them in so easy a manner, that it plainly appears how little possession they had obtained of her heart. She had no occasion for these thoughts from any other principle, but a mere disgust of this life, and the aspiration of her soul to a better. She apprehended she felt once or twice such indispositions that she

¹ The Order for the Visitation of the Sick.

concluded nature was proceeding towards some great sickness ; and accordingly she endeavoured to take full and broad views of death, that hence she might judge how she should be able to encounter her enemy ; but she found such a quiet indifference upon the prospect, leaning rather toward the desire of a dissolution, that she said, " though she did not pray for death, yet she could neither wish nor pray against it ; she left that before God, and referred herself to the disposal of Providence. If she did not wish for death, yet she did not fear it."

As this was her temper when she viewed death at some distance, so she maintained the same calm when in the closest struggle with it. In her sickness, that of the small-pox, she only was serene, when all was in a storm about her. The dismal sighs of all who came near her could not discompose her. She was rising so fast above mortality, that even her husband, who was more to her than all the world besides, and to all whose thoughts she had been upon every other occasion entirely resigned, could not now inspire her with any desires of returning back to life. Her mind seemed to be disentangling itself from her body, and so she rose above that tenderness that had a greater influence upon her than all earthly things whatever. It seemed, indeed, that all that was mortal was falling off, when even that could give her uneasiness. She received the intimations of approaching death with a firmness that neither bent nor softened under that which has made the strongest minds tremble. Then, when even the most artificial grow sincere, when the mask of hypocrisy drops and opens the full soul to view, it appeared what a perfect calm, and how sublime a piety possessed her. A ready willingness to be dissolved, and an entire resignation to the will of

God did not seem to forsake her so much as one minute, nor had any thing been left to be dispatched by her in her last hours. Her mind was in no hurry, but soft as the small voice that seemed to be calling her soul away to the regions above, she made her last steps with a stability and seriousness, that, how little ordinary soever they be, were indeed the correspondent harmonious conclusions of such a life as she had led. In her heavy disease she felt no inward depression, nor sinking of nature. She then declared that "she experienced the joys of a good conscience, and the powers of religion, giving her supports, which even the last agonies could not shake." Her constant gentleness to all about her never left her. That was indeed natural to her, but by its continuance with her in her sickness, all visibly perceived that nothing could put her mind out of its natural situation, and usual state.

A few hours before she breathed her last, when he who ministered to her in the best things, had continued in a long attendance about her, she was so free in her thoughts, that apprehending he might be weary, she commanded him to sit down, and repeated her orders till he obeyed them; a thing too trifling in itself to be mentioned, but that it discovered her presence of mind, as well as the sweetness of her disposition. Prayer was then her constant exercise as often as she was awake. And so sensible was the refreshment that her mind found in it, that she said she thought it did her mind more good, and gave her more ease, than any thing that was done to her. Nature sunk apace. She received the blessed sacrament with a devotion that inflamed as well as melted all who saw it.

That being over, she gave up herself so en-

tirely to meditation, that she seemed scarcely to regard any thing beside. She was then upon the wing. Such was her peace in her latter end, that though the symptoms showed that nature was much oppressed, yet she scarcely felt any uneasiness. It was only from what she perceived was done to her, and from those intimations that were given to her, that she judged her life to be in danger; but she scarcely knew herself to be sick by any thing that she felt at heart. Her bearing so much sickness with so little emotion, was for a while imputed to that undisturbed quiet and patience in which she possessed her soul. But when she repeated it so often, that she felt herself well inwardly, it then appeared that there was a particular blessing in so easy a conclusion of life, that had been led through a great variety of events with a constant equality of temper.

Though from a perusal even of the preceding narrative from Bishop Burnet's essay on her memory, the blessed effect of Christianity will have been seen in framing the mind to a meekness and resignation in the hour of affliction, which reason, unaided by religion, could never have attained unto, yet the following additional particulars of the closing scenes of her life will be not only interesting but also instructive.

When she was first taken ill, the next day her illness seemed to go off. I had the honour to be half an hour with her that day, says Bishop Burnet, and she complained then of nothing. The day following she went abroad, but her illness returned so heavily on her, that she could disguise it no longer, for her indisposition increased upon her, and within two days after, the small pox appeared with very bad symptoms. The king was struck with this beyond

expression. He called me into his closet, and gave a free vent to a most tender passion; he burst out into tears; and cried out that there was no hope of the queen; and that from being the happiest, he was now going to be the miserablest creature upon earth. He said, that during the whole course of his marriage he had never known one single fault in her, there was a worth in her that nobody knew besides himself.

Never was such a universal face of sorrow seen in a court or in a town as at this time; all people, men and women, young and old, could scarce refrain from tears. The new archbishop attended on her; he performed all devotions, and had much private discourse with her: when the desperate condition she was in was evident beyond doubt, he told the king he could not do his duty faithfully unless he acquainted her with the danger she was in: the king approved of it, and said, whatever effect it might have, he would not have her deceived in so important a matter. And as the archbishop was preparing the queen with some address, not to surprise her too much with the tidings, she presently apprehended his drift, but showed no fear or disorder upon it. She said, she thanked God "she had always carried this in her mind, that nothing was to be left to the last hour. She had nothing then to do, but to look up to God, and to submit to his will." It went further indeed than submission, for she seemed to desire death rather than life, and she continued to the last minute of her life in that calm and resigned state. She was almost perpetually in prayer; the day before she died she received the sacrament, all the bishops who were attending being admitted to receive it with her: we were, God knows, a sorrowful com-

pany; for we were losing her who was our chief hope and glory on earth; she followed the whole office, repeating it after the archbishop. After the sacrament was administered, she composed herself solemnly to die. She slumbered sometimes, but said she was not refreshed by it, and said often, that “nothing did her good but prayer.” She tried once or twice to have said something to the king, but was not able to go through with it. She ordered the archbishop to be reading to her such passages of Scripture as might fix her attention, and raise her devotion. Several cordials were given, but all was ineffectual. She lay silent for some hours: in conclusion, she died on the 28th of December. She was more generally lamented than perhaps any other princess in our nation and history⁴.

REFLECTION FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.
—“All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth; the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever⁵.”

⁴ Bishop Burnet's Essay on the Memory of Queen Mary, and his History of his own Life and Times.

⁵ Isa. xl. 6. 8.



ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON.

DIED 1694. AGED 64-5.

DR. JOHN TILLOTSON, Archbishop of Canterbury, was an eminent Divine, and exemplary Christian, and the author of many sermons, which have been greatly admired, for their just views and powerful reasonings.

On the 17th day of November, in the year 1694, he was seized with a sudden illness, which proved fatal to him, and mournful to all the friends of true piety. The first attacks came upon him while he was in that employment in which he delighted most, at church, and in the worship of God. He bore them with the usual neglect of himself; and though his countenance showed he was ill, he would neither interrupt nor break off from those sacred exercises, nor make haste to look after his health. Ah! the unhappy neglect of a life that deserved so well to be carefully preserved. The fit came on slowly, but seemed to be fatal. All symptoms were melancholy. It soon turned to a dead palsy. The op-

pression was so great, that it became very uneasy for him to speak; but it appeared that his understanding was still clear, though others could not have the advantage of it; he only said that he had no burden on his conscience. All remedies proved ineffectual. He expressed no concern to live, nor fear to die, but patiently bore his burden, till it sunk him on the fifth day, and in the 65th year of his age. I have somewhere read that letters addressed to him by no friendly hands, were found carefully put together and endorsed with the words, "May God 'forgive them as I do'."

The archbishop was attended the two last nights of his illness by his dear friend Mr. Robert Nelson, in whose arms he expired.

As the oppression which the archbishop suffered was so great, that it became very uneasy for him to speak what would have been, doubtless, worthy of being recorded, I will, instead, insert a letter of his to one Mr. Hunt, for it is suitable to my subject, and may be of use to some of my readers; first explaining, that in the year 1687, his intimate acquaintance, Mr. Nicholas Hunt of Canterbury, lay dangerously ill; and when Dr. Tillotson was informed that he was past recovery, he sent him the following excellent letter of consolation, to comfort and support him under the pressure of his lingering illness. This letter will be the more interesting, because from its contents, it is evident that Dr. Tillotson having just lost an only son, and having also just had a symptom of apo-

plexy, the prospect of death must have appeared immediately before him.

Edmonton, January 16th, 1687-8.

“Sir,

“I am sorry to understand by Mr. Janeway’s letter to my son, that your distemper grows upon you; and that you seem to decline so fast. I am very sensible how much easier it is to give advice against trouble in the case of another, than to take it in our own.

“It hath pleased God to exercise me of late with a very sore trial, in the loss of my dear and only child, in which I do perfectly submit to his good pleasure, firmly believing that He always does that which is best: and yet, though reason be satisfied, our passion is not so soon appeased; and when nature has received a wound, time must be allowed for the healing of it. Since that God hath thought fit to give me a nearer summons, and a closer warning of my own mortality, in the danger of an apoplexy; which yet, I thank God for it, hath occasioned no very melancholy reflections. But this, perhaps, is more owing to natural temper than philosophy and wise considerations.

“Your case, I know, is very different, who are of a temper naturally melancholy, and under a distemper apt to increase it; for both which, great allowances ought to be made. And yet, methinks, both reason and religion do offer us considerations of that solidity and strength, as may very well support our spirits under all frailties and infirmities of the flesh; such as these:—

“That God is perfect love and goodness: that we are not only his creatures, but his children, and are as dear to Him, as to ourselves: that He

does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men : and that all evils of afflictions which befall us, are intended for the cure and prevention of greater evils of sin and punishment : and therefore we ought not only to submit to them with patience, as being deserved by us, but to receive them with thankfulness, as being designed by Him to do us that good, and to bring us to that sense of Him and ourselves, which nothing else perhaps would have done : that the sufferings of this present life are but short and light, compared with those extreme and endless miseries which we have deserved, and with that exceeding and eternal weight of glory which we hope for in the other world ; that if we be careful to make the best preparations for death and eternity, whatever brings us nearer our end, brings us nearer to our happiness ; and how rugged soever the way be, the comfort is, that it leads us to our Father's house, where we shall want nothing we can wish for. Now we labour under a dangerous distemper, which threatens our life, what would we not be contented to bear, in order to a perfect recovery, could we but be assured of it ? and should we not be willing to endure much more, in order to happiness, and that eternal life which God that cannot lie hath promised ? nature, I know, is fond of life, and apt to be still lingering after a longer continuance here ; and yet a long life, with the usual burdens and infirmities of it, is seldom desirable ; it is but the same things over again or worse, so many more nights and days, summers and winters, a repetition of the same pleasures, but with less pleasure and relish every day ; a return of the same, and greater pains and trouble, but with less strength and patience to bear them. These and the like considerations I use to entertain myself withal, not only with contentment but

comfort; though with great inequality of temper at several times, and with much mixture of human frailties, which will always stick to us, while we are in this world. However, by these kinds of thoughts death seems more familiar to us, and we shall be able by degrees to bring our minds close up to it, without starting at it. The greatest tenderness I find in myself is with regard to some near relations; especially the dear and constant companion of my life, which I confess doth very sensibly touch me; but then I consider, and so I hope will they also, that this separation will be but a very little while, and that though I shall leave them in a bad world, yet under the care and protection of a good God, who can be more and better to them than all other relations, and will certainly be so to those that love Him, and hope in his mercy.

“ I shall not need to advise you what to do, and what use to make of this time of your visitation. I have reason to believe, that you have been careful in the time of your health to prepare for the evil day, and have been conversant in those books which give the best directions to this purpose; and have not, as too many do, put off the great work of your life to the end of it. And then you have nothing to do, but as well as you can, under your present weakness and pains, to renew your repentance for all the errors and miscarriages of your life; and earnestly to beg God’s pardon and forgiveness of them, for his sake, who is the propitiation for our sins: to comfort yourself in the goodness and the promises of God, and the hopes of that happiness you are ready to enter into; and in the mean time to exercise faith and patience for a little while; and be of good courage, since you see land; the storm which you are in

will soon be over, and then it will be as if it had never been, or rather, the remembrance of it will be pleasant.

“I do not use to write such long letters, but I do heartily compassionate your case, and should be glad if I could suggest any thing that might help to mitigate your trouble, and make the sharp and rugged way through which you are to pass into a better world, a little more smooth and easy. I pray God to fit us both for that great change which we must once undergo ; and if we be but in any good measure fit for it, sooner or later makes no great difference. I commend you to the Father of all mercies, and the God of all consolation ; beseeching Him to increase your faith and patience, and to stand by you in your last and great conflict ; that when you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you may fear no evil ; and when your heart fails, and your strength fails, you may find Him the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever. Farewell, my good friend, and whilst we are here, let us pray for one another, that we may have a joyful meeting in another world. So I rest, sir, your truly affectionate friend and servant⁷.”

It has been recorded that Mr. Hunt received this letter with great joy, and during his long sickness, behaved himself with a truly Christian fortitude. May the perusal of it produce a like frame of mind in those, who have hitherto been disquieted and cast down by reason of their trials and sufferings.

⁷ Life of Archbishop Tillotson, in Wordsworth's *Eccles. Biog.*, vol. iv.

REFLECTION BY ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON.—
The saints and martyrs of all ages have ascended up to heaven, and attained to that blessed state, which they are now possessed of, after all the evils which they have suffered in the world. They are now at rest from their labours, and if we tread in their steps, by a zealous imitation of the piety and holiness of their lives, and of the constancy and patience of their sufferings, we shall one day be translated into their blessed society, and made partakers with them of the same glorious reward.



REV. JOHN KETTLEWELL.

DIED 1695. AGED 42.

JOHN KETTLEWELL was an English divine, of great piety, benevolence, and humility. He was the author of some devotional works, and the beloved friend of Mr. Robert Nelson. It is said that all Mr. Kettlewell's words while on his death-bed, made such a deep and lively impression on Mr.

Nelson's mind, that they never afterwards left him. In his sickness and preparation for death, he thought that too much of his time was taken up in receiving the kind visits of his friends; and he would sometimes say, he wanted it to spend in devotion and in packing up for his removal, according to the rules and directions he himself had laid down for it, and therefore when decently he could, he avoided them; though his good temper yet could not admit of any thing that looked harsh, and especially when it was the effect of respect and attention towards him. But of all his friends, which were many, none was ever more acceptable to him, than Mr. Nelson, who thus informs us of the last hours of his departing friend.

"I visited him," says Mr. Robert Nelson, "very often, because I found it grateful to him, not but that I was very desirous of it too, being sensible how short a time I was likely to enjoy so advantageous a conversation. However, out of respect, I should have forborne, if he had not suffered me with a great deal of willingness.

"He had an entire trust and confidence in God, and would often say, 'that God was able, if He thought fit, to restore him to his health again, notwithstanding his great weakness; and that his medicines seemed to give him no encouragement; but that according to appearances his distemper was likely to end in his death. But as to the issues of life and death, he referred it wholly to God, who knew what was best for him.' He appeared to me neither desirous of life, nor afraid of dying, but he wholly resigned his will to the will of God: and notwithstanding the well grounded and comfortable hopes he had of a blessed immortality, he never wished to have his pains shortened, nor the time of dissolution hastened, but was entirely resigned

to what Providence should determine. I was once inquiring into some particulars of his past life, with a design of getting materials towards the assistance of such as should undertake to write it. He apprehending what I drove at, said to me, 'Mr. Nelson, it matters not that the world should be acquainted with the particulars of my life; they will be all laid open at the day of judgment, and then it will be time enough to have them known.'

"He carried himself with great decency, to those that attended him; his wife never did the least thing but he returned her thanks, as he did likewise upon several occasions to his servant that was always about him, which was a great mastery in such a languishing distemper, to overcome that peevishness which too ordinarily attends it.

"I never found him in a murmuring, complaining temper; but when he was worst, he would always find out some favourable circumstances, for which he would thank God. If he had not slept, he would thank God he had lain quiet, and had not been restless; if he had coughed much, he would thank God he had refreshing sleeps between his fits of coughing. He would always make the best of what he suffered, and was thankful that it was not worse, so far from being discontented that it was so bad. He gave as little trouble as he could, and would suffer nobody to watch with him, till a night or two before he died.

"On Thursday morning the 11th of April, 1695, he apprehended himself departing, and said to Mr. Bell, the Minister that attended him, 'I am now entering upon my last labour: the Lord gave, and he is now taking away; blessed be the name of the Lord. For I thank my God, I am going, without

any distrust, to a place of rest, joy, and everlasting bliss. There is no life like a happy death. I have endeavoured, even from my youth, to approve myself a faithful servant to my great Master; I have taken some pains in writing several books; I have seriously considered them, and am fully satisfied (looking on those about him), that you may find in them the way to heaven: the Christian duties contained therein have been my practice as well as study, and now I find the advantage of it. Therefore, be all of you careful to read them often and seriously, and live suitably thereunto, that when you come to the condition I am now in, you may die with comfort, as you see me do. I have little pain indeed, but my pain is nothing so extraordinary as my hopes, for I have earnestly repented of all my sins, and verily believe that through the tender mercies of my God, and merits of my blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, I shall be carried into Abraham's bosom.' After which he made this short prayer: 'I wait, O God, for that everlasting rest, which I want at present, but shall not long. I am ready when Thou my God callest for me, yet can stay with patience till Thou pleasest, for thy time is the best time, and thy pleasure is the best pleasure.'

"After some of the prayers of the Church, and the commendatory one which he particularly desired, he gave a nephew of his, one John Davil, who was about fifteen years old, and of whose education he had taken the charge and care, some advice in several particulars, as, 1st, To observe all the commandments of God; for he that breaks one is guilty of the breach of all; 'for the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness,' &c. 2nd, To despise and condemn the world, *i. e.* Let not the profits nor pleasures of it allure or tempt you; nor

let the fear of danger affright you from every Christian duty, but have a perfect dependence upon God, for He is a kind, merciful, and good God; I have found Him to be so. 3rd, To be humble, mild, and meek, to have candour and charity, &c. Then he exhorted him from all vice, as from pride, passion, and dissimulation, hypocrisy, lying; of which last he said, 'Do not tell a lie, no, not to save a world, not to save your king, nor yourself;' next he gave his sister some directions of the like nature, how to teach and instruct her children. His brother coming in, he told him wherein he had given offence; he forgave him heartily, and prayed for him and his: then he said, 'Brother, have I done you any wrong? Tell me, for if I have, I am ready and willing to make compensation;' being answered, 'No,' he put the same question to several others present. 'For,' said he, 'I am now going to offer my gift upon the altar; therefore, if my brother hath aught against me, I must first be reconciled to my brother, and then offer my gift.'

"The afternoon before he died, he was pleased to acknowledge my friendship towards him; but said, his wife had no reason to expect the same to her. I knew his concern for her, and gave him all the assurances of treating her as the relict of one whom I greatly esteemed, and dearly loved. Some little after this he turned to me as I sat by his bedside, and in a voice which I could hardly hear, said, 'Mr. Nelson, it is brave to go to a place where one can enjoy a friend, without fear of losing him; where every thing is agreeable, because neither sin nor sorrow enter; where there needs no sun to shine, forasmuch as God is the light of that place, and every saint is a star, each one's

bliss is felt by every blessed inhabitant, and happiness is dispensed by a blessed circulation.'

"He added something more about the heavenly Jerusalem, and the heavenly state, which I lost by the lowness of his voice, and his difficulty in speaking. The same afternoon, he desired his wife to read to him out of his book of death, which she did at two several times, at which he was extraordinarily devout, and very thankful to her, according to his usual custom, for her assistance. After this, he called her to him, and said, 'Child, trust God with thyself; I trust Him with thee freely. God's Providence is the best protection; and there is no such way to engage his good Providence, as by trusting Him.' Some time the same afternoon, she asked him how he did; he answered her, 'Very praiseworthy well, I thank God, for one near departing.' The prayers in the last agonies were read to him, at his desire, out of that book which was made the companion of his sickness, and which was the last effort of his charity for the salvation of his brethren. He sunk all of a sudden; for being raised to take some chocolate for his refreshment, he died in a moment in that posture⁸."

REFLECTION.—Memorable are these words, "God's providence is the best protection." We are all of us exposed more or less to many dangers and distresses. It may be we are uncomfortable, poor, and in dread of future want, destitute of friends, deprived of the comforts and enjoyments we once had, our bodies in pain, our spirits troubled. In the midst of all our difficulties and dangers, let us

⁸ The Life of the Rev. Mr. Kettlewell, prefixed to his Works. Ed. 1719, pp. 174, 175. The Narrative of Conversations on his Death-bed, by Robert Nelson.

remember the words of this good divine, "God's Providence is the best protection : and there is no such way to engage his good Providence as by trusting Him."

REV. THOMAS COLE.

DIED 1697. AGED 70.

HE was a student of Christ Church, Oxford, Principal of St. Mary Hall in the same university, and tutor to the celebrated John Locke. His last observations portray a truly religious frame of mind.

"It would be miserable dying," said he, "if we had nothing to ground our hope of eternal life upon : better never to have been born. I should not dare to look death in the face, if it were not for the comfortable assurance that faith giveth me of eternal life in Christ. I wait for a peaceable dismissal. I long to see salvation ; ere long, I shall be where I shall be freed from all pain. I would not live always : I long to be with Christ in Paradise. 'Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.' Pray that my eyes may be closed in the shades of death. 'The Spirit says, Come, and the bride saith, Come. O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly !' 'Father, not my will, but thine be done !' To rise for a little while, is but a sorry rising ; but to rise to go to bed no more, is a glorious resurrection : then we shall ever be with the Lord. It is well for us our souls do not stand upon the same terms with God as our bodies do, for they must die ; but eternal life

possesseth the soul, and will never leave it. If Christ had not gone into the grave before us, it would have been a dismal place to have stepped into; but He hath walked through that dark valley. No man is against his gain: if we did but believe that to die was gain, persons would not be so afraid of it. It is a pleasant thing to die. I am waiting for thy salvation. A believer cannot but long for that which is pleasant. You are come to hear my last dying groans, but know, when you hear them, it is the sweetest breath that ever I drew. I bless God I am going where I shall want nothing. I have a promise I shall ever be with the Lord. Christ is gone to prepare a place for me, and I am satisfied. I long for death, as a weary traveller doth for his rest: nothing troubles me but life, and nothing will relieve me but death: but let God do with me what He will: all He does is best. I shall quickly sleep, and then wake in an eternal day: ere long, my days and nights will all be one. How soon is nature overset by the God of nature, unless the God of grace stand by to support it: a finite creature could not endure, if everlasting arms were not underneath. The apprehensions that faith gives me of a better life is my comfort: and as for going, God can make it no loss to you, nor loss to me; and that will be a blessed return of prayer. If we had not the hope of the glory of God, this world would moulder away, as poor and despicable. I long for God to speak the word; it is better to be with God than here. We look here, and we look there; but when all is set before us, then we see that in the mysteries of God, which we never saw before: all is made out. God loveth to be with those that love to be with Him. Pray that God would only glorify Himself, and his own name, in my life or death. Time

passeth away into eternity, where there is no end. I am coming down to the dust of death; we live but dying lives in the body; they are but short recoveries of any time that we have, till death be swallowed up of life. I long to be immortal; it is a mean thing to live a dying life."

This pious and venerable servant of Christ fell asleep in the Lord, A.D. 1697^o.

REFLECTION.—True is the remark of this excellent divine, "It would be miserable dying if we had nothing to ground our hope of eternal life upon, better never to have been born. I should not dare to look death in the face, if it were not for the comfortable assurance that faith giveth me of eternal life in Christ."

Miserable, therefore, must be the last hours of unbelievers who have no hope in death; contrast their state with that of all Christians who can say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley and the shadow of death I will fear no evil; thy rod and staff comfort me."

THE RIGHT HON. LADY CUTTS.

DIED 1698. AGED 18.

THIS lady was the wife of the Right Hon. John Lord Cutts, of whose bravery at the siege of Namur, Rapin gives an account¹.

The celebrated Dr. Francis Atterbury, then Dean of Carlisle, and chaplain to Queen Anne,

^o Life of the Rev. Thomas Cole.

¹ Vol. xiv., 8vo ed., pp. 237, 238, 239.

and afterwards Bishop of Rochester, has supplied the following particulars of the exemplary life and tranquil death of her who is the subject of this memoir. The ministers of the Gospel, who are entrusted with so many methods of promoting piety in the world, are among the rest entrusted with this, of truly representing to the minds of men such shining patterns of virtue, as are most likely to engage their attention and increase their imitation.

At her private devotions she was very punctual and regular; morning and evening came not up more constantly in their course, than her stated hours of private prayer; which she observed not formally as a task, but returned to them always with desire, delight, and eagerness. She would on no occasion dispense with herself from paying this duty, no business, no common accident of life, could divert her from it; she esteemed it her great honour and happiness to attend upon God; and she resolved to find leisure for that, for whatever else she might want it. In her public devotions she was full of humility, devotion, and fervency. Her behaviour during the time of Divine service was very devout and solemn. When the bread of life was distributed she was sure to be a devout and never-failing communicant; and the strictness of her attention, and the reverence of her behaviour were, if it were possible, raised and improved on those occasions. The lively image of a crucified Saviour, then exhibited, could not but make very many impressions on a mind that abounded with so much pious warmth and tenderness.

Of all books the Book of God was that in which she was most delighted and employed; and which was never for any considerable time out of her

hands. No doubt, she knew and felt the great use and sweet influence of it, in calming her mind, and regulating her desires, and lifting up her thoughts towards heaven ; in feeding and spreading that holy flame, which the love of God had kindled in her heart, and which she took care by this means, to keep perpetually burning.

And in this Book of God she was more particularly conversant on God's day ; a day ever held sacred by her, and which, therefore, always in her family wore a face of devotion suitable to its dignity. It was truly a day of rest to all under her roof. Her servants were then dismissed from a good part of their attendance upon her, that they might be at liberty to wait on their great Lord and Master, whom both she and they were equally bound to obey.

To the poor she always showed herself very compassionate and charitable. Of the other delights, with which a high fortune furnished her, she valued this, that it gave her an opportunity of pursuing the several pleasures of beneficence, and of tasting all the sweets of well doing. " She delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon her, and she caused the widow's heart to sing." Retirement and privacy she always loved, and therefore chose it, when after the death of a near relation who had the care of educating her, she was at liberty to have lived otherwise. Such were her religious habits of life, and they are related to show how necessary a holy life is to a happy death. Thus did she prepare and dispose herself for the enjoyment of that perfect rest, the celebration of that endless Sabbath, which she is now entered upon ; thus did she practise beforehand upon

earth, the duties, the devotions, the customs, and manners of heaven.

And yet all this goodness and all this excellence was bounded within the compass of eighteen years and as many days; for no longer was she allowed to live among us. She was snatched out of the world as soon almost as she had made her appearance in it. Like a jewel of high price, just shown a little and then put up again; and we were deprived of her by that time we had learnt to value her.

As her life was short, so her death was sudden: she was called away in haste, and without any warning. One day she drooped, and the next she died; nor was there the distance of many hours between her being very easy in this world and very happy in another.

However, though she was seized thus suddenly by death, yet was she not surprised; for she was ever in preparation for it, her loins girt (as the Scripture speaks), and her lamp ready trimmed, and burning. The moment almost that she was taken ill, she was just risen from her knees, and had made an end of her morning devotions. And to such an one, a sudden death could be no misfortune. We pray, indeed, against it, because few, very few, are fit for it; and the Church is to proportion her forms to the generality of Christians.

In truth, she could not be called away more hastily than she was willing to go. She had been used so much to have her conversation in heaven, and her soul had been so often upon the wing thither, that it readily left its earthly station upon the least notice from above; and took the very first opportunity of quitting her body, without lingering or expecting a second summons. She stayed no longer after she was called, than to

assure her lord of her entire resignation to the Divine will, and of her having no manner of uneasiness upon her mind; and to take her leave of him, with all the expressions of tenderness. When this was over, she had nothing more to do with her senses; she sunk immediately under her illness, and, after a short unquiet slumber, slept in peace.

She is gone to the place where all tears are wiped from her eyes; where there is no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. She is gone, and her works have followed, and will follow her, to her great and endless advantage. God grant that, when we also follow her, we may do it with as little surprise, and as much cheerfulness².

REFLECTION BY BISHOP ATTERBURY.—It is better, doubtless, to go into the house of mourning, than into the house of feasting; but upon this condition, that we come better out of the one, than out of the other: that we leave our vanities and our vices behind us; that we lay aside our affections towards this world, and our indifference towards another; that we put on holy and hearty resolutions of being, even now, what we shall wish we had been hereafter when the fatal hour approaches; and of living the life of this righteous person, that we may die her death too.

² Fourteen Sermons by Francis Atterbury, D.D., Dean of Carlisle, and Chaplain to Queen Anne, 8vo ed. 1708. Discourse on the death of Lady Cutts, p. 179, &c.



REV. WILLIAM BURKITT.

DIED 1703. AGED ABOUT 53.

THIS pious divine was vicar and lecturer of Dedham, in Essex; and is well known by his excellent commentary on the New Testament. A seven days' conflict with a very malignant fever carried him off. He was, according to his desire, taken with his death-sickness upon a Lord's day, when he was in the service of God at church, and he went to keep his everlasting Sabbath upon the Lord's-day after, about eleven of the clock in the forenoon.

When he came to lie upon his death-bed, there was a sweet calmness and serenity upon his spirit, and expression of his glorious hopes. I will give you his words, when he took his solemn leave on the Friday night after the fit was returned that proved fatal; they were these, "I shall leave you, but may the presence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be with you; may the presence of the Holy Trinity be with you: I hope to see you again with joy at the resurrection of the just;" and he added, "What you have seen in

me that is good and imitable, follow it ; but what you have observed in me that is not so, let not your affection and love to me sway you to it."

When his friends about him bewailed their great loss, which they feared was coming upon them by his departure, he desired them not to be too much concerned for him ; "for to him," he said, "to live would be Christ, and to die would be gain," and added, "that God would provide for them." He blessed God that he had finished what he designed upon the New Testament, and that the way of it was prepared and ushered in with very many prayers of his ; and he hoped, through God's blessing, it would prove beneficial to many, and especially to his own people.

There were several persons by his dying bed, who having declared that under God he had been the instrument of their conversion, put him into an ecstasy of joy. So happily fruitful was his ministry. His patience in his last sickness was very exemplary. He declared that God made his sick bed easy to him, and said, "he had preached patience, and wrote of patience, and therefore was bound to practise patience." The concluding scene of his life was a continual course of prayer, thanksgiving, and cheerful resignation to the will of God. He counselled those about him to remember what he had instructed them in from the pulpit, and in private, and that they would order their lives agreeably thereunto : his natural temper was of the happiest and best sort, cheerful enough, and withal very serious. This holy man, a very little time before his expiring breath, signifying his desire to leave this life, prayed in these words, "Come, Lord Jesus³."

³ Nath. Parkhurst, Vicar of Yoxford, Suffolk ; Biog. Dict.

REFLECTION.—In disease, decay, and the prospect of death, great is the comfort of the Christian, resting as he does on the words of divine truth, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” When we meditate on such words, we see why it may be said of this servant of God, “when he came to lie upon his death-bed, there was a sweet calmness and serenity upon his spirit, and expression of his glorious hopes.”



JOHN LOCKE.

DIED 1704. AGED 72.

THE celebrated author of the “Essay on the Human Understanding,” &c. In 1700, Mr. Locke resigned his seat at the Board of Trade, and from this time continued altogether at Oates, in which agreeable retirement he employed the last years of his life entirely in the study of the Holy Scriptures.

His strength began to fail him more remarkably than ever at the entrance of the summer of the year 1703, and he seemed now convinced that his dissolution was at no great distance, and often spoke of it himself, but with great composure.

Mr. Locke's weakness continued to increase, and at length his legs began to swell, and for some weeks before his death he could not walk, but was carried about the house in an arm-chair. As he had been incapable for a considerable time of going to church, he thought proper to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at home, and two of his friends communicating with him, as soon as the office was finished, he told the minister that "he was in perfect charity with all men, and in a sincere communion with the Church of Christ, by what name soever it might be distinguished."

Some papers being brought into his chamber, he inquired what they were, and caused them to be read to him; after which he said, "that his work here was almost at an end, and he thanked God for it." Soon after, somebody coming near his bed, he desired they would remember him in the evening prayers. They told him that, if he pleased, the family would come to prayers in his chamber, to which he agreed. They asked him, if he thought he was near death; he answered, "that perhaps he might die that night, but that he could not live above three or four days." There being, afterwards, nobody else in the chamber but Lady Masham, who sat by the bedside, "he exhorted her to look on this world only as a preparation for a better." He added, "that he had lived long enough, and that he thanked God he had enjoyed a happy life; and that after all he looked upon this life to be nothing but vanity."

After supper the family came up into his chamber to prayers : between eleven and twelve o'clock he seemed to be a little better. Lady Masham would have sat up with him, but he would not permit her, saying, that perhaps he might sleep, and if he should find any alteration he would send for her. He did not rest that night, but resolved to try to rise the next day, which he did. He was carried into his study, and was seated in an easy chair, where he slept by fits some time. Afterwards he desired Lady Masham, who was reading to herself in the Psalms while they dressed him, to read aloud, which accordingly she did, and he seemed very attentive, till he was hindered by the nearer approaches of death, upon which he desired her to read no more, and expired a few minutes after ⁴.

REFLECTION.—Great wisdom is included in these few words, “Look on this world only as a preparation for a better.” Our present state is one of probation, by which we mean, one in which God would prove, try, and amend us, and so make us fit for another and a better state. The divine precepts, warnings, and afflictions are the means commonly used for this end. If they produce their proper effect they will not only teach us, as they did this great Christian philosopher, “to look upon this life to be nothing but vanity, but also to look on this world only as a preparation for a better.”

⁴ Life of John Locke, British Plutarch.



JOHN RAY.

DIED JAN. 1705-6. AGED ABOUT 78.

JOHN RAY was an English divine, eminent for a piety which was combined with an excellent knowledge of natural history and philosophy. As his end approached, he thus expressed himself with regard to the Church of England. "I am a priest of the Church of England, ordained by Dr. Sanderson, then Bishop of Lincoln. That I did not follow the peculiar functions of my duty more, is now the greatest concern and trouble to me. I do here profess, that as I have lived, so I desire, and by the grace of God resolve, to die, in the communion of the Catholic Church of Christ, and a true though unworthy son of the Church by law established in this kingdom. I do think, from the bottom of my heart, that its doctrine is pure, its worship decent, and agreeable to the word of God, and, in the most material points of both, conformable to the faith and practice of the godly churches of Christ in the primitive and purer ages. I am not led to this persuasion so

much from force of custom and education, as upon the clear evidence of truth and reason. And after a serious and impartial examination of the grounds thereof, I am fully persuaded that the scruples men raise against joining in communion with it, are unreasonable and groundless; and that the separation which is made may very justly be charged upon the dissenters themselves as the blameworthy authors of it⁵.”

A SUITABLE PRAYER FROM THE LITURGY.
—“Almighty and merciful God, of whose only gift it cometh that thy faithful people do unto thee true and laudable service; grant, we beseech thee, that we may so faithfully serve thee in this life, that we fail not finally to attain thy heavenly promises, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen⁶.”

⁵ Rev. Mr. Pyke.

⁶ Collect for the 13th Sunday after Trinity.



BISHOP BULL.

DIED 1710. AGED ABOUT 76.

Dr. GEORGE BULL was raised up by the great Head of the Church to be not only one of its brightest ornaments, but also one of its most powerful advocates. He was the learned and pious Bishop of St. David's.

On the 27th of September, 1709, he was seized with a violent coughing and spitting of blood. He then perceived that his dissolution was near at hand, and accordingly declared, "that he was now sensible of his own decay, and that he was sure he could not live many days." His physicians seemed to incline to the same opinion after some short attendance, though they expressed themselves herein with some hesitation and reserve, which the good bishop perceiving, thus addressed himself to one of them: "Doctor, you need not be afraid to tell me freely what your opinion of me is: for I thank my good God, I am not afraid to die: it is

what I have expected long ago, and I hope I am not unprepared for it now."

Repentance and mortification had been so much the happy work of his strongest and healthful days, that, when death approached, he received the summons not only with resignation, but with some degree of satisfaction. He had wisely made such a careful preparation for his last hours, that he was now able to bear the thoughts and approaches of his great change without amazement. He had overcome that strong inclination of nature, whereby men usually cleave so fast to life, and, by the wiser dictates of reason and religion, became willing and contented to die, whenever God thought fit. This sense of his approaching departure out of the world, made him careful not to omit any thing that could be now done, both for himself and family, for the better securing their common interest and salvation. During the time, therefore, of his confinement, he would often have the family to prayers in his chamber, at the usual hour, and the prayers for the sick, in the Office of Visitation, were added on those occasions, and sometimes the Litany. The prayers for the sick were frequently repeated during the whole time of his illness, in which he expressed always the greatest devotion.

A few days before his death, while in the presence of several persons, he made a solemn confession and declaration of the conduct of his whole life, and so took his leave of the world in a manner the most edifying that could be. Mr. Bull, his son, Mr. Archdeacon Stephens, his son-in-law, and Mr. Philips, a clergyman of that neighbourhood, and his own chaplain, were of the number of those that were present, who were edified not a little with what they heard from his mouth ;

and have all attested, that as he bore his last sufferings with a resigned temper and firmness of mind, which nothing but the grace of God, and the consciousness of a well spent life could inspire, so that they never knew a warmer example to influence all within the reach of it to a just sense of their own duty. First, the bishop made a public confession of his faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed. Then he gave a short account of his life, running over the several stages of it, making useful remarks upon the principal passages which occurred in each stage; recounting the several errors and miscarriages which attended them, as far as he could recollect them by his memory at that time. From the former he took occasion to admire the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence, in the disposal of all the events of things and conditions of men in the world; and to bless God for all his dispensations towards himself in particular, whether of good or evil things, in the whole course of his life.

The latter gave him occasion to renew his sorrow and repentance of them, and for all the other offences in his life past which he might have forgotten, or could not at present recollect, for all which he expressed his earnest desire of mercy and forgiveness, in some short but fervent prayers and ejaculations. And because what he now did was perfectly conformable to that public profession which he had formerly made when he was in health, and with the prospect of such an hour as this, the reader, perhaps, will not be sorry to have here a copy of it; which is as followeth:—
“I most firmly believe,” said he, “that as I yield a stedfast assent to the Gospel of Christ, and as I work out repentance by that faith, shaking off, by the grace of God, the yoke of every deadly sin,

and in earnest devoting myself to the observation of his evangelical law, I shall obtain, by the sovereign mercy of God the Father, for the merits only of Jesus Christ, his Son, and my Lord and Saviour, who offered up Himself unto the Father a truly expiatory sacrifice for my sins, and for the sins of the whole world, the full remission of all my past sins, be they never so many and great. But then I have no otherwise any confidence of my sins being forgiven me, or of my being in a state of grace and salvation, but as by a serious examination of my conscience, made according to the rule of the Gospel, there shall be evidence of the sincerity of my faith and repentance.

“And I believe, moreover, that while I bring forth fruits worthy of faith and repentance, and while I not only abstain from those crimes which, according to the Gospel, exclude a man from heaven, but do diligently, likewise, exercise myself in good works, both those of piety towards God, and those of charity towards my neighbour, so long I may preserve the grace that is given me of remission and justification; and that, if I die in this state, I am in the way of obtaining it, by the mercy of God, and eternal life and salvation for the sake of Jesus Christ. I believe, yet, that I may fall away; and after having received the Holy Ghost may, as our Church speaketh, ‘depart from grace;’ and that, therefore, I ought to work out my salvation with fear and trembling. I believe, also, that in the Gospel there is pardon promised to all that fall, let it be never so often, so that they do, before their death, renew their repentance, and do again their first works; but then there is not any where promised to them either space of life or grace, that they may repent. I believe that there is given to certain

persons a certain extraordinary grace, according to the good pleasure of God ; but I account it the greatest madness for any one, therefore, to presume upon such a grace, or to challenge aught for himself beyond the promises of God which are made in the Gospel. And, lastly, it is my firm belief, that throughout the whole course of my salvation, from the very first setting out to the end thereof, the grace and assistance of God's Spirit is absolutely necessary ; and that I never have done, and never can do any spiritual good without Christ, is my full and certain persuasion."

This is the confession of his faith, which he declared on his death-bed. While to his faith he thus added repentance, and to repentance charity, as the life and soul of them both, and casting himself, after having done all, upon the infinite mercies of God, and the inestimable merits of Christ, with the deepest sense of his own unworthiness, thereby expressed the true and only way of justification which he had chosen ; of which he had long before said, " This is the way of salvation, which, by God's grace, I have entered into, or, at least, have desired to enter into, which I have therefore chosen, because it is clearly set forth to me in the Holy Scriptures, and is a trodden and a safe way, which all Catholic Christians, for fifteen hundred years at least, from our Saviour's birth, have trodden before me ;" and which was now ratified by this, his last authentic act and deed, made before many witnesses.

For having now solemnly professed his faith, that he might testify to them his earnest desire of dying in the communion of the Apostles, and adored the most wise and gracious Providence of God towards him, upon a faithful review of the

good and evil of his past life, from his first setting out to the last period of it, he gave glory to God in the profound humiliation of his soul, and by suitable acts of contrition, adapted to several parts of his life, magnified the grace of his Redeemer, calling upon Him by faith, with great fervency, for inward purification and perfect remission of his sins, with devout acts and aspirations, expressing the sincerity of his faith and repentance, and concluded in the very words of the Psalmist David, "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me from my secret faults!"

After this, the good bishop expressed his charity in all the branches of it, as far as he was then able to do it, namely, in a hearty desire of forgiveness from all those whom he had offended or misused, and in a cheerful readiness to forgive those who had done him any hurt or injury. As to the other branch of charity, that of giving, he had done it in so generous and plentiful a manner all his lifetime, that he did not express any great concern that the circumstances of his family were not such as would not admit of any act of charity of this kind; this he concluded, likewise, with suitable prayers and intercessions.

In the last place, he professed that as he had always lived, so he was now resolved to die in the communion of the Church of England, and declared that he believed it was the best constituted Church this day in the world; for that its doctrine, government, and way of worship were, in the main, the same with those of the primitive Church. He then put up some prayers for its peace and prosperity, and declaring again that he was resolved to die in its communion, he desired absolution, and received it.

The evening before he departed, his son-in-law,

Mr. Archdeacon Stephens, arrived from a great journey, upon the news he received of his dangerous illness. The good bishop embraced him with great satisfaction, when he raised himself up in his bed to give him his blessing : when Mr. Stephens expressed his great sorrow and concern to find him in so great misery by the complaint he had, he told him, "he had endured a great deal ; that he did not think that he had so much strength of nature, but that it was now near being spent ; and that in God's good time, he should be delivered." And when Mr. Stephens, in order to support him, urged that his reward would be great in heaven, the good bishop replied, "My trust is in God, through the merits of Christ ;" and being prevented from enlarging by the exquisiteness of his pains, he desired Mr. Stephens to retire, and refresh himself after his journey. Some little time after this, he told those that were about him, that he perceived that he had some symptoms of the near approach of death, and ordered them to call the doctor to him ; and when he came, he told him he thought himself a-dying : to which the doctor answered, that he could not say that he would live many hours. Upon this he sent for his wife and children, and the rest of his family, and desired them to pray with him and for him. And when prayers were over, he took his solemn leave of every one in particular, giving each of them some serious exhortation and advice. And this being done, he gave them his benediction, and dismissed them.

He was, moreover, very careful that none might do themselves an injury by their zealous attendance upon him while they were not capable of doing him any further good, wherefore he charged his wife, as he did also his son-in-law, Mr.

Stephens, to retire to their rest; and when the doctor offered to continue with him in his last hours, after their dismissal, he told him, "he would not have him impair his health by sitting up with him, since he could not be farther serviceable to him any other way than by praying for him, and that he might do in his chamber." Nevertheless, he desired his son and daughter, and his chaplain, with some others of the family, who were not in so much danger of being hurt by it, to stay with him until he died, that they might assist him with their prayers, especially in his last agonies, when he should not be able to pray for himself. He thought now, and indeed so did all about him, that he could not last above an hour or two longer, and that by the great weakness he was reduced to when his last sickness left him, and the pain he had endured since the beginning of his late distemper, the whole fabric in a person of his age was now so shattered that the separation of the soul from the body could not be tedious or uneasy. But, contrary to all expectation, he held out many hours under his last agonies.

He had his understanding and memory to the very last, and that in as great strength and vigour as ever he had them in the remembrance of those who perfectly knew him. During the time of his last conflict, he scarce troubled himself or those that waited upon him, with taking any thing: but he passed it all entirely in acts of piety and devotion. Sometimes he joined with those that were present in the prayers of the Office of the Visitation of the Sick; the latter part whereof was, by his direction, frequently repeated in this interval, but the greater part of it he spent in pious meditations and private ejaculations; upon what subjects can be no further guessed at than by

observing his eyes and hands frequently lifted up towards heaven, and sometimes tears and smiles interchangeably succeeding each other in his countenance; one might think that as the former were the attendants of his repentance and confessions, so the latter were the result of that joy and comfort which he felt in his mind, from the sense of the pardon of his sins, and of the peace and favour of a reconciled God; which might also receive no small addition at this juncture from the near prospect he had of his deliverance from this mortal and painful life, and of his entrance into a state of everlasting happiness.

When he found that he continued thus to live several hours longer than he expected, he sent again for his wife and children to his bedside, to take his leave once more of them and the rest of his family that were up: and he was even fuller now in his exhortations to them than before, and they were very well suited and particularly applied to the circumstances and conditions of the several persons to whom they were given. He recommended his wife and child to the Divine Providence and protection, but in so moving and affectionate a manner as is difficult to express; and he thanked all his servants for the pains they had taken with him in his sickness. And as for the rest, his exhortations ran chiefly upon the great importance of religion, the vanity of the world, the deceitful nature of riches and honours, and what miserable comforters they would prove at the last; the inefficacy, or at least the great hazard and uncomfortable state of a death-bed repentance, and the absolute necessity of a holy life, in order to a happy death; a life spent in the service of God, in doing good in the world, especially works of mercy and charity. These are the subjects which he en-

deavoured to impress upon the minds of those he left behind him, and then once more he gave them his solemn benediction. After this, he recommended his soul into the hands of his Creator, in several short, but most excellent prayers; repeated most part of the seventy-first Psalm, so far as it suited his circumstances, than which nothing could be more proper to express his trust and dependence upon the power and goodness of God, and the continual want he had of his grace and assistance: moreover, he ordered his chaplain to use the commendatory prayer when he should perceive him to be at the point of expiring, which was accordingly done several times.

About nine in the morning his spirits began to sink and his speech to falter, and a few minutes after, without any visible sign of pain or difficulty, with two gentle sighs he resigned his soul to God. The last word he spoke was "Amen," to the commendatory prayer, which he repeated twice distinctly and audibly after his usual manner, a very little while before he died⁷.

A PRAYER.—"Teach us, who survive, in this and other like daily spectacles of mortality, to see how frail and uncertain our own condition is; and so to number our days, that we may seriously apply our hearts to that holy and heavenly wisdom, whilst we live here, which may in the end bring us to life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ thine only Son our Lord. Amen⁸."

⁷ Life of Bishop Bull, by Robert Nelson, Esq., ed. 1713.

⁸ The Order for the Visitation of the Sick.



BISHOP KEN.

DIED 1711. AGED ABOUT 73.

DR. THOMAS KEN, Bishop of Bath and Wells, was distinguished by his piety and devotional writings.

On Monday, March 12, 1710-11, he was confined to his bed, and on the Monday following, his soul was set free. He was remarkably patient in his sickness; and when, upon his own inquiry of his physician, how many days he thought he might probably live, desiring him to speak plainly and freely, and telling him he had no reason to be afraid of dying, and being by him answered about two or three days, his only reply was (his usual expression, and that without the least concern), "God's will be done;" desiring that no application might be made to cause him to linger in pain. It can be no wonder he should so little regard the terrors of death, who had for many years travelled with his shroud in his port-manteau, as what he often said might be as soon wanted as any other of his habiliments, and which

was by himself put on as soon as he came to Longleat⁹, giving notice of it the day before his death, by way of prevention that his body might not be stripped. He dozed much the day or two before he died. He was buried at Frome Selwood, it being the nearest parish within his own diocese to the place where he died, as by his own request, in the churchyard, under the east window of the chancel, just at sunrising, without any manner of pomp or ceremony besides that of the order for burial in the Liturgy of the Church of England¹.

The following extract from Bishop Ken's will, may be appropriately inserted in this place.

"As for my religion, I die in the holy Catholic and Apostolic faith, professed by the whole Church before the disunion of East and West; more particularly, I die in the communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan innovations, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross. I beg pardon of all whom I have in any way offended, and I entirely forgive all who have any way offended me. I acknowledge myself a very great and miserable sinner, but die in humble confidence, that, on my repentance, I shall be accepted in the Beloved."

A Petition from the Evening Hymn by Bishop Ken.

Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed.

Teach me to die, that so I may
With joy behold the judgment day.

⁹ Viscount Weymouth's seat, in Wiltshire.

¹ Life of Bp. Ken, by W. Hawkins, Esq., Middle Temple, pp. 44. 8vo. 1713.



ARCHBISHOP SHARP.

DIED 1714. AGED ABOUT 69.

DR. JOHN SHARP, Archbishop of York, was a prelate eminent for his ability and zealous devotion. During his last sickness, the Archbishop discontinued his diary; and as there are no detailed accounts of what he said and did whilst ill, some interesting particulars have been selected from his diary, and some of his devotional habits for some time before his death recorded, on the authority of his son, Mr. Thomas Sharp.

In the summer-time, when he resided at Bishoptorpe, and when the weather was fine, he usually offered his thanksgivings in the open air, either in his garden or in the adjoining fields and meadows, whither he frequently walked to perform his devotions. The parish church of Acaster is within a little mile of the Archbishop's palace. It stands by itself in the fields. Thither he frequently retired alone, and made the little porch of that church his oratory where he solemnly praised and addressed God. Afterwards he removed from this place to another, for when the plantations were

grown up to some perfection, he changed the scene of his thanksgiving, and offered them up in a particular walk, which from thence he called his Temple of Praise; it is a grass walk hedged on each side with yew, so thick and high as to be completely shaded at all times of the day, except at noon, and is near a wilderness. Wandering in these places he spent many a happy hour, especially towards the close of his life. Here was a privacy that answered his design, and a solemnity that suited his taste; and here he poured out his soul in prayers and thanksgivings, and had such delightful intercourse with God, as would affect him to a very great degree.

Thus, for instance, in his diary, in the year 1712, he says, "After evening prayers I walked in my garden, and there, in my temple of praise, poured out my soul to God in an unusually ardent manner; so that I think I was never so rapturously devout in my life." The eye that once beheld him in one of these warmer acts of piety, would rarely meet with any sight again so extremely solemn and affecting. It was such a lively representation of the power of godliness as a verbal description cannot reach, which left upon the mind and heart of the spectator (for he could not pass altogether unobserved) an indelible impression of the charms of true religion, and he was used to say, he could not bear to live a day if it were not for the comforts of religion.

In the beginning of December, 1713, his appetite failed him, and he grew very weak. He went to Bath by the advice of his physicians, but his strength decreased, and his memory decayed every day till he died. Although we have no particular accounts of what he said and did, yet it is observed by those about him that he prayed con-

tinually, and the chief token by which they perceived how his strength declined was his shortening of his prayers. He ordered the daily service in his family to be performed in his hearing, and was observed to make his responses along with them. A little time before he expired, he told his lady that "he should be happy." The last words he repeated were from one of Mr. George Herbert's poems².

REFLECTION.—If God be thus the Object of praise, and the source of so great happiness to his saints, who are permitted to hold communion with Him while in this their state of pilgrimage, how unspeakable their felicity, when they shall see Him face to face, and be irradiated with the Divine perfections.

² Archdeacon Sharp, Life, &c.



BISHOP BURNET.

DIED 1714. AGED 72.

DR. GILBERT BURNET, Bishop of Salisbury, was an eminent theological and historical writer, and a very pious and active prelate. Being in the seventy-second year of his age, the Bishop was taken ill of a violent cold, which soon turned to a pleuritic fever; he was attended in it by his worthy friend and relation Dr. Cheyne, who treated him with the utmost care and skill; but finding the distemper grew to a height which seemed to baffle all remedies, he called for the assistance of Sir Hans Sloane and Dr. Mead, who quickly found his case was desperate. His character was too well known to induce any one to conceal from him the danger his life was in; he bore the notice of it with that calm resignation to the will of Providence which had always supported him under the severest trials. As he preserved his senses to the last, so he employed the precious remnant of life in continual acts of devotion, and in giving the best advice to his family, of whom he took leave

in a manner that showed the utmost tenderness, accompanied with the firmest constancy of mind. And whilst he was so little sensible of the terrors of death as to embrace its approach with joy, he could not but express a concern for the grief he saw it caused in others ³.

A short time before his death this good man wrote the following REFLECTION.—“True religion is a perfection of human nature, and the joy and delight of every one that feels it active and strong within him. Of this I write with the more concern and emotion because I have felt this the true, and indeed the only joy which runs through a man’s heart and life. It is that which has been for many years my greatest support: I rejoice daily in it. I feel from it the earnest of that supreme joy which I pant and long for, and I am sure there is nothing else, which can afford any true or lasting happiness.”

³ T. Burnet’s Memoir of the Life of Bishop Burnet, appended to Burnet’s History of his Life and Times.



RIGHT HON. JOSEPH ADDISON.

DIED 1719. AGED 63.

ADDISON was an eminent poet, and the much-admired author of many moral and religious essays. Dr. Samuel Johnson, who wrote the life of this celebrated man, informs us, that he had for some time been oppressed by shortness of breath, which was now aggravated by a dropsy; and that, finding his danger pressing, he prepared to die, conformably to his own precepts and professions.

Before this attack of illness, Addison had made the following observation in one of the numbers of the *Spectator*: "There is nothing in history which is so improving to the reader, as those accounts which we meet with of the deaths of eminent persons, and of their behaviour in that dreadful season. I may also add, that there are no parts in history which affect and please the reader in so sensible a manner. The reason I take to be this; because there is no other single circumstance in the story of any person which can possibly be the case of every one who reads

it. When we see a person at the point of death, we cannot forbear being attentive to every thing he says or does, because we are sure that some time or other we shall ourselves be in the same circumstances."

Dr. Johnson says; "Lord Warwick (Addison's step-son) was a young man of very irregular life, and perhaps of loose opinions. Addison, for whom he did not want respect, had very diligently endeavoured to reclaim him; but his arguments and expostulations had no effect. One experiment, however, remained to be tried. When he found his life near its end, he directed the young lord to be called; and when he desired with great tenderness to hear his last injunctions, told him, '*I have sent for you, that you may see how a Christian can die*.' What effect this awful scene had on the Earl, I know not: he likewise died himself in a short time."

REFLECTIONS BY ADDISON:—1. I would have every one to consider that he is in this life nothing more than a passenger, and that he is not to set up his rest here, but to keep an attentive eye upon that state of being to which he approaches every moment, and which will be for ever fixed and permanent. 2. A trust in the assistance of an Almighty Being produces patience, hope, cheerfulness, and all other dispositions of the mind that alleviate those calamities which we are not able to remove. 3. When the soul is hovering in the last moments of its separation, when it is just entering on another state of existence, to converse with scenes, and objects, and companions that are altogether new,—what can support her under such

⁴ Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets, vol. ii.

tremblings of thought, such fear, such anxiety, such apprehensions, but the casting of all her cares upon Him who first gave her being, who has conducted her through one stage of it, and will be always with her to guide and comfort her in her progress through eternity. 4. Religious hope has this advantage above any other kind of hope, that it is able to revive the dying man, and to fill his mind not only with secret comfort and refreshment, but sometimes with rapture and transport. He triumphs in his agonies, whilst the soul springs forward with delight to the great object which she has always had in view, and leaves the body with an expectation of being reunited to her in a glorious and joyful resurrection.



REV. CHARLES LESLIE, A.M.

DIED 1722.

THIS able Divine was the author of "The Truth of Christianity demonstrated," "A Short and Easy Method with the Jews," and other convincingly

argumentative works. The following extract contains the beginning and ending of the last letter which he ever wrote.

“To my worthy friend, R. Kenyon.

“Sir,—I make this effort, probably the last, of using my pen. Though the events of life have given me occasions to take a nearer view of the doctrines and worship of other Christian Churches, yet from thence I have been confirmed in my belief, that the Church of England, abuses notwithstanding, is the most agreeable to the institutions of Christ and his Apostles. And being now in a point of time to which eternity is near, you will believe me if I declare (and to the world I would declare it) that in this communion I resolve to die, and expect to be saved by the merits and mediation of Christ Jesus.

“CHARLES LESLIE⁵.”

Instead of a Reflection, we will add a suitable PRAYER from the Liturgy of the Church. “O God, the protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; increase and multiply upon us thy mercy, that thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal: Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ’s sake our Lord. Amen⁶.”

⁵ From a Letter to Mr. Kenyon, in the “Life of Charles Leslie,” prefixed to his Works.

⁶ Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity.



SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

DIED 1727. AGED 84.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON has by general consent been considered the greatest of all philosophers in ancient or modern times. Sir Isaac was also well known by the appellation of an "excellent divine." That he who among all the individuals of his race possessed the highest intellectual powers, was not only a learned and profound divine, but a firm believer in the doctrines of religion, is one of the proudest triumphs of the Christian faith. Had he distinguished himself only by an external respect for the offices and duties of religion; and had he left merely in his last words an acknowledgment of his faith, his piety might have been ascribed by the enemies of religion to a prudent submission unto popular feeling. But he had been a Christian from his youth.

Towards the close of life the reading of religious books had become one of his most habitual occupations, and after he had performed the duties of his office, they formed, along with the conversation of

his friends, his principal amusement, and no doubt his chief ground of comfort also; for he cherished its doctrines and leant upon its promises. By the help of great precautions, which, except towards the decline of life he never had occasion for, he procured great intervals of ease; yet he was not free from some severe paroxysms, which even occasioned large drops of sweat to run down his face. In these circumstances he was never heard to utter the least complaint, nor express the least impatience; and as soon as he had a moment's ease, he would smile and talk with his usual cheerfulness. A little before his death he observed, "I do not know what I seem to the world, but to myself I appear to have been only like a boy playing upon the sea-shore, and diverting myself by now and then finding a smoother pebble or prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay before me all undiscovered." He died at the advanced age of eighty-four, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, where a monument has been erected, which, after recording some of his greatest discoveries, proceeds to state, that he was

"An assiduous, sagacious, and faithful Interpreter of
Nature, Antiquity, and the Holy Scriptures.

He asserted in his Philosophy the Majesty of God,
And exhibited in his conduct the simplicity of the Gospel⁷."

A PROMISE FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE.—"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory⁸."

⁷ Brewster's Life of Sir Isaac Newton, and Biog. Brit.

⁸ Is. lx. 19.



BISHOP WILSON.

DIED 1755. AGED 93.

DR. THOMAS WILSON was Bishop of Sodor and Man. His residence was in the Isle of Man, where he dedicated his time to works of active benevolence, and to the composition of treatises which have been greatly valued for their warm and earnest piety, and their enforcement of Christian duty, as springing from Christian principles.

He had attained his ninety-third year, when, in consequence of a cold caught by walking in his garden in very cold weather, after reading evening prayers in his own chapel, he was confined to his bed. His pious and useful life was now drawing to a close. He saw the evening shades advancing; he felt his earthly tabernacle decaying; he beheld the messengers of death near at hand, and welcomed their approach. The scenes which lie beyond the valley of the shadow of death grew brighter the nearer he approached them. Whilst walking thoughtfully along the shore of eternity, he seemed to hear seraphic sounds from the harps

of ministering angels, and to behold with the martyr Stephen the heavens open, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

Bishop Wilson stood like a pilgrim, with his staff in his hand, ready to depart. Whilst thus waiting for his summons, and in hourly expectation of going forth to meet the bridegroom, he appeared more like an inhabitant of the world of glory, on which he was about to enter, than a sojourner in this vale of tears. His last days were his best days. He was ripening fast for heaven. A candidate for the ministry, who at that time resided in his house, and continued with him till his death, delighted to relate the scenes which he then witnessed. He used to tell, with joy in his countenance, of the benignity in the Bishop's behaviour, the heavenliness of his discourse, and the fervour of his prayers. This student, who slept in a room adjoining the Bishop's bedchamber, frequently overheard, at midnight, the orisons of the holy man. He could distinguish his whispering voice pouring forth supplications and thanksgivings to the great Preserver of men, who "never slumbers nor sleeps." Sometimes the words of the pious psalmist were indistinctly heard; "I will arise at midnight and give thanks unto thee. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name!" Sometimes passages from the *Te Deum*: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth." Thus did God give his beloved servant songs in the night-season.

But few wearisome nights or unprofitable days were allotted to this advanced Christian. He was now almost in view of the heavenly world, his heart and his flesh gradually failing him, till the pulse of life stood still, and his spirit returned unto God who gave it.

He was interred in the church-yard of Kirk-Michael, almost the whole population of the island attending the funeral, and lamenting their loss. The coffin in which his body was placed was made from one of the elm trees which the Bishop planted soon after his coming to the Isle of Man. A few years before his death, he ordered the tree to be cut down and sawed into planks, to be in a state of readiness to receive his remains, and probably to answer the further end of a *Memento mori* °.

REFLECTION BY BISHOP WILSON.—God be praised, unless Christians are very much wanting to themselves, they may suffer, but if they keep in their eye the rewards of a future life, and live like men that do so, they cannot be miserable.

° Life of Bishop Wilson, by Stowell.



REV. JAMES HERVEY.

DIED 1758. AGED 44.

HE was rector of Weston Favell and Collingtree, and the well known author of "Meditations among the Tombs," and "Reflections in a Flower Garden," &c.

Mr. Hervey had for many years struggled with much weakness and languor, and was frequently confined by severe fits of sickness; but in the latter end of the year 1758 he grew worse. On the first Sunday in December, after family prayers in the evening, he was seized so extremely ill, that his dissolution was apprehended to be very near; with great difficulty he was got up stairs, and after that never left his room. He was grievously afflicted with a hectic cough in the night, that obliged him to rise very early; he was sensible of his danger, yet was willing to use proper means to mitigate the pain and prolong life. Mr. Maddock, his curate, was much with him, to whom he pathetically spoke of his assurance of faith, and of the great love of God in Christ,

"How much," said he, "has Christ done for me. and how little have I done for so loving a Saviour! If I have preached even once a week, it was at last a burthen to me. I have not visited the people of my parish as I ought to have done; and I have not thus preached from house to house. I have not taken every opportunity of speaking for Christ."

These expressions were accompanied with tears. "But," said he, "do not think that I am afraid to die—I assure you I am not. I know what my Saviour hath done for me, and I want to be gone; but I wonder and lament to think of the love of Christ in doing so much for me, and how little I have done for Him." And in another conversation, speaking of his approaching dissolution, and our ignorance of the sacred word, he observed, "How many precious texts there are, great with the richest truths of Christ, which we cannot comprehend, of which we know nothing; and of those we do know, how few do we remember! A good textu-ary is a good divine—that is the armour; the word of God is the sword. They are the weapons I must use when that subtle spirit, the arch-adversary of mankind, comes to tempt and sift me in my last conflict. Surely I had need be well provided with these weapons; I had need have my quiver full of them, to answer Satan with texts out of the word of God when he assaults me."

On the 19th, the pains of his body abated, but he grew drowsy and lethargic; and in the night his dissolution was expected.

The next day he was visited by his worthy friend, Dr. Stonhouse, who declared his opinion, that Mr. Hervey could not survive above two or three days; and, speaking of the consolation which a good man enjoys in the prospect of death, Mr.

Hervey replied, "True, doctor, true, the only valuable treasures are in heaven."

When Dr. Stonhouse was going away, Mr. Hervey reminded him of a dangerous fall from his horse, which he had met with not long before, by which he had been much bruised; and observing that he looked pale, said, "He hoped he would think upon such narrow escapes, so often fatal to others, as a warning to him from God, and remember them as such;" adding, "How careful ought we to be to improve those years which remain, at a time of life when but few remain to us!"

The day before his death, Mr. Hervey attempting to walk a few steps in his room, his strength failing him, he must have fallen if not supported; a fainting fit ensued, and it was some time before he recovered. When he came to himself, his brother William, who was come from London to see him, said, "We were afraid you were gone." He answered, "I wish I had." On the 25th, his curate paying him his morning's visit, Mr. Hervey, sitting down, for he was unable to lie in bed, said, "Sir, I cannot talk with you to-day." He complained much of a great inward conflict which he had, and, laying his hand on his breast, said, "Oh! you know not how great a conflict I have." During this time his eyes were almost constantly elevated to heaven, and his hands clasped in prayer. He frequently said, "When this great conflict is over, then"—but added no more, though it was understood he meant, that then he should be at rest.

Dr. Stonhouse came to him about three hours before he expired, to whom he strongly urged the importance of his everlasting concerns, as here is no abiding place; and entreated him not to be

overcharged with the cares of this life, but in the multiplicity of his business to attend to the one thing needful.

Dr. Stonhouse, observing the difficulty with which he spoke, and finding by his languid pulse that his dissolution was near, desired that he would spare himself. "No, no," was his reply, "you tell me that I have but few moments to live. Oh! let me spend them in adoring our great Redeemer." He then said, "Though my heart and flesh fail me, yet God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." He expatiated also on those words, "All things are yours, life and death, for ye are Christ's." "Here," said he, "is the treasure of a Christian. Death is reckoned among his inventory, and a noble treasure it is. How thankful am I for death, as it is the passage through which I pass to the Lord and giver of eternal life; and as it frees from all this misery you now see me endure, and which I am willing to endure as long as God sees fit; for I know He will, in his own good time, dismiss me from the body. These light afflictions are but for a moment, and then comes an eternal weight of glory. Oh, welcome, welcome, death! Thou mayest well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian. 'To live is Christ; but to die is gain.'"

When Dr. Stonhouse was taking his final leave, Mr. Hervey expressed great gratitude for his visits, though medicine had been unable to relieve him. He then paused a little, and, with great composure, although the pangs of death were upon him, said, "Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy most holy and comfortable word; for mine eyes have seen thy most precious salvation. Here, Dr.

Stonhouse, is my cordial: what are all the cordials given to support the dying in comparison of that which arises from the promises of salvation by Christ? This, this supports me." About three o'clock he said, "The great conflict is over; now all is done." After which he scarce spoke any words intelligibly, excepting now and then—"Precious salvation!" During the last hour he said nothing, but leaned his head against the side of the chair, and, without the least struggle, expired, between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, on Christmas-day, 1758, in the 45th year of his age¹.

REFLECTION.—No Christian ought to refuse the Divine dispensations of sickness and pain, or even of death itself, since he is enabled to say, "Death is to me the gate of heaven."

The following is Sir James Stonhouse's account of the "Conversation of a late eminent Christian in London, with some of his relations, on their taking leave of him to go into the country."

"Our health is no more at our command than length of days: mine seems drawing fast towards a conclusion. But I am content with every allotment of Providence; for they are all in wisdom—unerring wisdom.

"There is one thing needful; which is an arm underneath—this bears up and supports me; and though the rolling tempestuous billows surround me, yet my head is kept above them, and my feet

¹ Life of Rev. James Hervey, prefixed to his whole Works, vol. i. p. 9.

are firmly established. Oh, seek it, press after it, lay hold of this one, this main thing. Though painful my nights, and wearisome my days, yet I am preserved in patience and resignation. Death has no terrors, nor will the grave have any victory. My soul triumphs over Death, Hell, and the Grave.

“Husbands and wives, parents and children, health and riches, must all go. Disappointment is another name for them. I should have been thankful, had I been able to have attended where I have been so often refreshed with the conversation of pious men ; but it is otherwise allotted. The Lord knows best what is best for us. I am content and resigned to his will. I feel a foretaste of the joy which is to come ; and who would wish to change such a state of mind ? As I have lived, so shall I die with the most unshaken assurance, that I have not followed cunningly devised fables, but the pure living eternal substance. Let the aged be strong, the middle-aged be animated, and the youth encouraged : for the Lord is with Zion, the Lord will bless Zion.

“If I am now to be removed (as I apprehend I soon shall) out of Christ’s Church militant, where I have endeavoured, in some measure, to fill up my duty, I have an evidence that I shall gain admittance into his glorious Church triumphant, far above in the heavens. My dear love to all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Farewell².”

REFLECTION.—When we see so many Christians blessed at the hour of departure with such a foretaste of heavenly joys, we cannot consider it

² Sick Man’s Friend, by Sir J. Stonhouse, p. 98, ed. 1835.

otherwise than as a pledge of the approaching realization of the words, "Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant³."



RIGHT HON. LORD LYTTTELTON.

DIED 1773. AGED 64.

GEORGE Lord Lyttelton was the author of several valuable works. Among these his "Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul," may be considered the most important and instructive.

An affecting account of his death has been given by his physician, Dr. Johnstone of Kid-

³ Heb. xii. 22—24.

derminster. He says, "On Sunday evening the symptoms of his lordship's disorder, which for a week past had alarmed us, put on a fatal appearance, and his lordship believed himself to be a dying man. From this time he suffered by restlessness rather than pain, and though his nerves were apparently much fluttered, his mental faculties never seemed stronger when he was thoroughly awake. Though he wished his approaching dissolution not to be lingering, he waited for it with resignation. On Sunday, about eleven in the forenoon, he sent for me. He then proceeded to open the fountain of that heart from whence goodness had so long flowed as from a copious spring. 'When I first set out in the world,' said he, 'I had friends who endeavoured to shake my belief in the Christian religion. I saw difficulties which staggered me, but I kept my mind open to conviction. The evidences and doctrines of Christianity, studied with attention, made me a most firm and persuaded believer of the Christian religion. I have made it the rule of my life, and it is the ground of my future hopes.'

"When Lord and Lady Valentia⁴ came to see him, he gave them his solemn benediction, and said, 'Be good, be virtuous, my lord; you must come to this.' Thus he continued giving his dying benediction to all around him. On Monday morning a lucid interval gave some small hopes, but these vanished in the evening; and he continued dying, though with very little uneasiness, till Tuesday morning, Aug. 22nd, when, between seven and eight o'clock, he expired without a groan⁵."

⁴ Viscount Valentia, afterwards Earl of Mountnorris, married Lucy, Lord Lyttelton's daughter.

⁵ Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, vol. iv.

REFLECTION.—Of all wise men, he is the wisest who is duly prepared for eternity.

REV. MR. LONGUEVILLE.

DIED Feb. 7th, 1776.

THE following interesting communication is extracted from a letter sent by a minister from Amsterdam, to his friend, a clergyman, in England, giving an account of the exemplary death of Mr. Longueville, minister of the English Church at Amsterdam, who died there.

“ Amsterdam, Feb. 12th, 1776.

“ Reverend Sir,

“ Your kind letter, inquiring about the state of Mr. Longueville’s health, came to my hand yesterday; and had it come a few days sooner, it might have been communicated to him before he entered into his Master’s joy. As his life was exemplary, so his death has been edifying and instructive.

“ I had the honour to attend him for several days and nights when he was laid upon his death-bed, and to assist him in his last moments; and I must own, that during this solemn occasion I found stronger evidence of the truth of Christianity, and more conviction in my own heart, than can be found from the arguments and proofs given by divines, either ancient or modern. He retained his senses and understanding to the last moment, and reasoned on the truth and excellency of religion with such energy, clearness, and strength of argument, that the weeping bystanders were filled

with delight and amazement. Indeed, the celestial joys which darted in upon his mind served to wipe away the tears from our eyes. His farewell address to his dear wife and children, his grandchildren, his colleague, and the servants of his family, all standing together by his bed-side, was such a scene of awful grandeur and solemnity, and attended with such a variety of circumstances, so moving and pathetic, that I was never witness to the like. His dying instructions to me (delivered with a pathos and an earnestness which pierced my very soul), his anxiety for our flock, and his extreme concern for the poor of it, shall never drop from my remembrance. When he perceived his last end to be nearly approaching, he composed himself a little to rest, in order to acquire as much strength as might enable him to recommend to us the important concerns of religion; and he performed this last duty with such dignity and composure, such noble elevation of soul, as brought to our remembrance the words of our great Lord, 'Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children.' Luke xxiii. 28. About twenty minutes before he expired, we prayed by his bed-side, and after the prayer was done, he returned me thanks in distinct and articulate words.

"Thus, Reverend Sir, I have given you a short account of the dying behaviour of my dear and much beloved colleague.

"I remain, Reverend Sir,

"Your most obedient and very humble servant,
"N. C."

REFLECTION.—The declaration made by the author of this narrative is important and much to

⁶ The Sick Man's Friend, by Sir J. Stonhouse, Bart., M.D.

our purpose. The earnest, solemn, and heavenly-minded advice delivered by a departing Christian is so deeply affecting, and so awfully persuasive, that it cannot but make a deep impression on every one who hears it. If they who lead thoughtless and immoral lives entertain a secret desire to overcome temptation, and to be dissuaded from their ruinous career, let them no longer avoid the Christian's death-bed, but resort thither, as soon as an opportunity shall be offered; for there they will hear a preacher they cannot withstand, and truths they cannot gainsay.



BISHOP LOWTH.

DIED 1787. AGED 77.

DR. ROBERT LOWTH was Bishop of London. The uncertainty of human life, and the duty of constant preparedness for death, were very forcibly shown in the family of this learned and pious prelate. His eldest daughter, of whom he was passionately fond, died, aged only thirteen. His

second daughter, Frances, died as she was presiding at the tea table. She was going to place a cup of coffee on the salver; "Take this," said she, "to the Bishop of Bristol;" immediately the cup and her hand fell together upon the salver, and she instantly expired. His eldest son, also, of whom he was led to form the highest expectations, was hurried to the grave in the bloom of youth. Amid these scenes of distress, the venerable Bishop, animated by the hopes which the religion of Jesus Christ alone inspires, viewed with pious resignation the king of terrors snatching his dear and amiable children from his fond embrace; and at length himself met the stroke of death with fortitude, and left this world in full and certain hope of a better⁷.

REFLECTION.—How awfully true the language of our Liturgy, and how loud the call for an immediate attention to religious duties! "In the midst of life we are in death."

⁷ Chalmers's Biog. Dict.



SIR WILLIAM JONES.

DIED 1794. AGED 47.

SIR WILLIAM JONES was a judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William, in India; he was a celebrated scholar in the Eastern languages, and a pious Christian.

When arrived in India, he wrote the following prayer while suffering under the first attack of illness:—"O Thou bestower of all good! if it please Thee to continue my easy tasks in this life, grant me strength to perform them as a faithful servant; but if thy wisdom hath willed to end them, by this thy visitation, admit me, not weighing my unworthiness, but through thy mercy declared in Christ, into thy heavenly mansions, that I may continually advance in happiness, by advancing in true knowledge and awful love of Thee. Thy will be done!"

On the morning of the day when he died, his attendants, alarmed at the evident symptoms of approaching dissolution, came precipitately to call his friend Lord Teignmouth: not a moment was lost

in repairing to his house. He was lying on his bed in a posture of meditation, and he expired without a pang or a groan. His bodily suffering, from the complacency of his features, and the ease of his attitude, could not have been severe; and his mind must have derived consolation from those sources where he had been in the habit of seeking it, and where alone, in our last moments, it can ever be found. When we compare the shortness of his life with the extent of his labours, the mind is overpowered; yet his example, however disgraceful to the indolent, and even apparently discouraging to the humble, will not be without the most salutary effects, if it be allowed to prove that no difficulties are insurmountable by regular industry, that the human faculties can be exalted by exercise beyond the common degrees with which we are apt to be satisfied, and that the finest taste is not incompatible with the profoundest studies and the exercise of Christian piety. As the Bible should be our companion in sickness as well as in health, the following attestation to its excellence by so learned and good a man will be much valued. The passage is transcribed from his own MSS. in his Bible, where it was found. "I have carefully and regularly perused these holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, that the volume, independently of its Divine origin, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may have been written⁸."

REFLECTION.—The Hon. Charles How has

⁸ Memoirs of the Life of Sir William Jones, by Lord Teignmouth; 4to, 1804, p. 374. Chalmers's Biog. Dict., &c.

made the following reflection:—"If the love of wisdom and virtue be so sweet and delightful to the soul in this its imperfect state, what floods and torrents of joy will be poured in upon it when all its affections shall be boundlessly and eternally enlarged for their reception! as doubtless they will be, to the inconceivable bliss of those most happy souls, who shall be received into the everlasting favour of the Almighty."



DOCTOR SAMUEL JOHNSON.

DIED 1784. AGED 75.

THE well known Compiler of the English Dictionary, and the author of many much admired moral and religious essays, &c. Doctor Johnson, from the time he was certain his death was near, appeared to be perfectly resigned, was seldom or never fretful or out of temper, and often said to his faithful servant, who gave this account, "Attend, Francis, to the salvation of your soul, which is the object of greatest importance;" he

also explained to him passages in the Scriptures, and seemed to have pleasure in talking upon religious subjects.

The following particulars are selected to show what was the state of his mind for some days previous to his decease. The information is supplied by a number of friends who visited Dr. Johnson at various times during his severe and protracted illness of dropsy.

Sir John Hawkins states, that upon his sitting down at the Rev. Mr. Strahan's, at Islington, on the 27th of November, 1784, Dr. Johnson said, "that the prospect of the change he was about to undergo, and the thought of meeting his Saviour, troubled him, but that he had hope that He would not reject him." Sir John proceeds, "After I had dictated a few lines (of a proposed will), I told him that the ancient form of wills contained a profession of the faith of the testator. He thanked me for the hint, and calling for paper, wrote the following words:—'I humbly commit to the infinite and eternal goodness of Almighty God my soul, polluted with many sins; but, as I hope, purified by repentance, and redeemed, as I trust, by the death of Jesus Christ.'"

Sir John Hawkins, who kept a diary of his visits to Dr. Johnson during the last fortnight of his friend's illness, thus continues his narrative:—

"Sunday, Nov. 28th, 1784. Johnson said, 'I have at times entertained a loathing of sin and of myself, particularly at the beginning of this year, when I had the prospect of death before me; and this has not abated when my fears of death have been less; and, at these times, I have had such rays of hope shot into my soul, as have almost persuaded me that I am in a state of reconciliation with God.'

“Dec. 5th, 1784, being Sunday, I communicated with him and Mr. Langton, and other of his friends, as many as nearly filled the room. Mr. Strahan, who was constant in his attendance on him throughout his illness, performed the office. Previous to reading the exhortation, Johnson knelt, and with a degree of fervour that I had never been witness to before, uttered the following most eloquent and energetic prayer:—

“‘Almighty and most merciful Father, I am now, as to human eyes it seems, about to commemorate, for the last time, the death of thy Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. Grant, O Lord, that my whole hope and confidence may be in his merits and in thy mercy. Forgive and accept my late conversion; enforce and accept my imperfect repentance; make this commemoration of Him available to the confirmation of my faith, the establishment of my hope, and the enlargement of my charity; and make the death of thy Son Jesus Christ effectual to my redemption. Have mercy upon me, and pardon the multitude of my offences. Bless my friends: have mercy upon all men. Support me by the grace of thy Holy Spirit in the days of weakness, and at the hour of death; and receive me at my death to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.’”

Mr. Windham also kept a private journal of the visits which he paid to Dr. Johnson at this time.

“Tuesday, Dec. 7th, 1784. Dr. Johnson observed, that I was entering upon a life which would lead me deeply into all the business of the world; that he did not condemn civil employment, but that it was a state of great danger, and that he had, therefore, one piece of advice earnestly to impress upon me, that I would set apart every seventh

day for the care of my soul. That one day, the seventh, should be employed in repenting of what was amiss in the six preceding, and fortifying my virtue for the six to come. That such a portion of time was surely little enough for the meditation of eternity.

"Dec. 12th. Dr. Johnson said, with great fervour, in words which I shall, I hope, never forget, 'God bless you, my dear Windham, through Jesus Christ;' concluding with a wish, 'that we might share in some humble portion of that happiness which God might finally vouchsafe to repentant sinners.'"

Dr. Brocklesby gives us this brief account. "For some time before his death, all Dr. Johnson's fears were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and propitiation of Jesus Christ. He talked often to me about the necessity of faith in the sacrifice of Jesus as necessary beyond all good works whatever for the salvation of mankind."

J. Hoole, Esq., visited him frequently, and kept a diary of Dr. Johnson's last illness, in which I find the following interesting statement:—

"Saturday, Nov. 20th, 1784. This evening, about eight o'clock, I paid a visit to my dear friend, Dr. Johnson, whom I found very ill. We had a most affecting conversation on the subject of religion, in which he exhorted me, with the greatest warmth of kindness, to attend closely to every religious duty, and particularly enforced the obligation of private prayer, and receiving the Sacrament. He desired me to stay that night, and join in prayer with him, adding, that he always went to prayer every night with his man Francis. He conjured me to read and meditate upon the Bible, and not to throw it aside for a play or a novel. He said

he himself had lived in great negligence of religion and worship for forty years; that he had neglected to read his Bible, and had often reflected what he could hereafter say, when he should be asked why he had not read it. He begged me repeatedly to let his present situation have due effect upon me, and advised me, when I got home, to note down in writing what had passed between us, adding, that 'what a man writes in that manner, dwells upon his mind.' Between nine and ten o'clock, his servant Francis came up stairs; he then said, 'we would all go to prayers, and desiring me to kneel down by his bed-side, he repeated several prayers with great devotion. I then took my leave. He then pressed me to think of all he had said, and commit it to writing. I assured him I would. He seized my hand with much warmth, and repeated, 'Promise me you will do it,' on which we parted."

About two days after his death, a letter, from which the following extracts are made, was communicated to Mr. Malone, in a letter by the Hon. J. Byng:—

"Dear Sir,—Since I saw you, I have had a long conversation with Causton who sat up with Dr. Johnson, and from what I can gather from him, it should seem, that Dr. Johnson was perfectly composed, steady in hope, and resigned to death. At the interval of each hour, they assisted him to sit up in his bed, when he regularly addressed himself to fervent prayer; and though sometimes his voice failed him, his sense never did during that time. He said his mind was prepared, and the time to his dissolution seemed long. At six in the morning, he inquired the

hour, and on being informed, said, that all went on regularly, and he felt that he had but a few hours to live. Causton says that no man could appear more collected, more devout, or less terrified at the thoughts of the approaching minute. This account has given us the satisfaction of thinking that this great man died as he lived, full of resignation, strengthened in faith, and joyful in hope."

A PRECEPT delivered by Dr. Johnson in his last illness.—"Let me exhort you always to think of my situation, which must one day be yours. Always remember that life is short and eternity is long."

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

REASONABLE it is to believe that there are none who would desire to pass out of this world in a disquieted and miserable state of mind, under the accusations of a guilty conscience, without hope of pardon, and with a fearful looking for of judgment to come. The greater their sufferings during this present mortal state, the more anxiously do men commonly desire to end their days in charity with all men, and not without having made their peace with God; so that at last, they may resign their souls most calmly into the hands of that God, before whom they are about to appear. Of all who entertain this reasonable desire, few can have read the memorials of those who have died in the Lord, without having more earnestly than

ever expressed the wish, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his¹."

Free from trial and affliction these servants of God certainly were not, nor must we expect to be. Some encountered the greatest temptations which can assault the soul, others suffered the severest pains which can afflict the body. Therein the principle was tested,—is He that is with them greater than all they that are against them? Can Divine grace in such extremes support soul and body under that load of grief and pain? Will trust in the wisdom of God the Father, faith in the redemption of Christ the Son, hope in the consolation of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, strengthen those weak hands, and confirm those feeble knees? Still more, can they bind up the broken in heart, and impart that peace of mind which passeth all understanding? An experiment has been tried in these instances similar to that of Job. Of them the tempter has said, Will they be able to hold fast their integrity, if thou permittest me to destroy them? All that a man hath will he give for his life: put forth thine hand now, and touch their bone and their flesh, and they will curse Thee to thy face². And what has been the result of the contest? "Love is stronger than death; many waters could not quench it, neither could the floods drown it." Faith triumphed over pain and fear, sickness and death. Divine grace has been sufficient in every time of need: the servants of God have been made "more than conquerors through him" who loved them.

In this same great conflict we must all sooner or later engage; thus will it be to us a personal

¹ Numb. xxiii. 10.

² Job ii. 3—5.

concern. Eternal life and eternal death are dependent on the issue. Sickness will come, age will come, death will come. In that great hour of trial, experience will denounce all earthly pleasures, and say, "Miserable comforters are ye all³." Wealth and honours, purple and fine linen, luxury and forbidden pleasures, so far from bringing aid and comfort when most needed, are a mockery to the soul, and aggravate her grief. They will not, cannot endure reflection, nor afford a solid ground of consolation. There are afflictions so heavy as to bear down the pride of princes and the precepts of philosophers; to extinguish the passion for wealth, and to overwhelm the powers of intellect. In such moments, so far from rendering help, the pomps and vanities of this world fall paralyzed at the aspect of death. Too often have they been relied upon to the sorrow and confusion of those who, in moments of delusion, had said, "Thou art my hope." In the dying hour the expectations formed of them are sunk for ever.

Who that had to proceed over the great deep on a long and difficult voyage, upon the success or failure of which his all depended, would commit himself to some crazy, ill-built bark, of which, in the language of the prophet, one might truly say, "Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen the mast, they could not spread the sail⁴;" and of which, observation and experience enforce the conviction, that it is altogether unequal to the undertaking, and that if the attempt be made, foundler it will in the first heavy gale to which it may be exposed? Obligated to cross the dark and boundless ocean, who so infa-

³ Job xvi. 2.

⁴ Is. xxxiii. 23.

tuated as not to follow the dictate of prudence to choose the safest ship—the ship which, having oft been tried, has weathered every storm, and never failed to carry her passengers into the haven where they would be? Has Christianity done this? Has it afforded security in danger, and shelter in the storm? Has it borne its disciples over many a raging billow, and landed them on shores where peace for ever reigns? Yes! the cloud of witnesses presented in the Holy Scriptures, and the memorials of Christians preserved in the annals of Christian biography (increased without number as they might have been by instances taken from the humbler walks of life), most fully prove, that there is a time when the servants of God do realize the petition made at their baptism, when “being delivered from thy wrath, they are received into the ark of Christ’s Church, and being stedfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, (do) so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally they come to the land of everlasting life, there to reign with Thee, world without end.” One would therefore suppose, that arguments in abundance were supplied by these examples, to decide the course of the wavering, and to confirm the hearts of the faithful. For, if it be true, that while all earthly hopes have failed in effecting this, Christianity has secured, and can alone secure our eternal safety, then, by this argument, we are bound to be decided, and to act, so long as we are possessed of reason, and regard our happiness and well-being. These Christian examples and recorded narratives are standing and imperishable monuments raised by the hand of God in the sight of all his Church, not only to decide the wavering, but to convey encouragement and consolation to all its afflicted members.

They are a pledge that the Holy Spirit will indeed be a comforter to all God's faithful servants in every future age—that He is able and willing to allay their fears, confirm their faith, and infuse that peace of God which passeth all understanding.

These monuments of departed Christians may also be looked at as silent monitors of many a solemn truth, and many a neglected duty. They teach us the uncertainty of life, the certainty of death; that "all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." They awaken a careless world to a sense of the sinfulness, the folly, and the danger of procrastination in whatever concerns the salvation of the soul. In terms which can give offence to none, they inculcate the wisdom and necessity of preparing to meet our God, by a life of self-examination, repentance, faith, and holiness. They point to the wells whence the children of God have drawn, and may yet draw, the waters of consolation in their greatest need. They unite in declaring that there is a God who heareth prayer, a Saviour who redeemeth, a Holy Ghost who sanctifieth all the elect people of God. They hand down to posterity the parting advice of those who, once in the chamber of sickness, or abroad in the busy world, experienced the ill-usage of men, or the assaults of Satan; passing through the same trials and temptations to which we are now exposed, and which we may desire to know how to bear or overcome.

The voice of reproof and warning comes not harshly from the regions of the dead, who

have no anger to gratify, no motive to deceive, no feeling of moroseness to indulge. The words of dying Christians cannot be condemned or gainsaid; for they are full of the wisdom which is from above—peaceable, gentle, without partiality, without hypocrisy. As speechless preceptors they convey admonition to the children of this world, who, not balancing the relative value of things, are sacrificing their souls and the interests of eternity to time and sense. But above all, they point to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;” and in this most comfortable truth, we, if duly prepared to receive it, may have the enjoyment of that peace of mind which the world can neither give nor take away.

THE END.

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